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The Beaver

CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZIN

December 2008 | January 2009

PLUS Book and Gift Guide

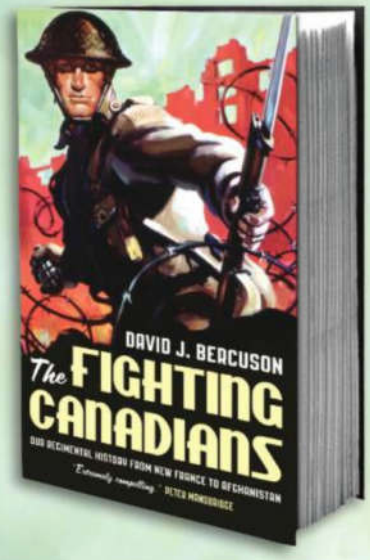
Banished!

They were ordered into exile 250 years ago. But for P.E.I.'s Acadians, the worst was yet to come.

In the Shadow of Champlain

The Fire Horses

Brush Strokes of History



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"From the Plains of Abraham to Kandahar, David J. Bercuson, one of Canada's most respected historians, traces the story in an extremely compelling way for all who want to understand what happens in the midst of battle and why."

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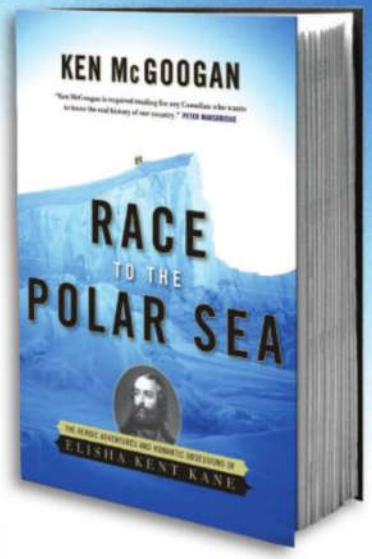
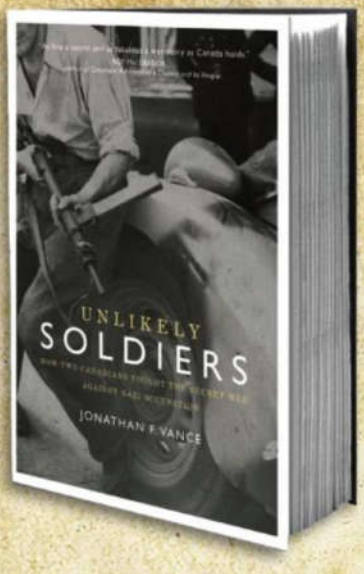
THE GLOBE AND MAIL





FROM AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR JONATHAN F. VANCE, THE EXTRAORDINARY STORY OF TWO YOUNG MEN JOINED IN A WORLD OF WAR-FUELLED ESPIONAGE

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ROY MacGREGOR

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The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGAZINE

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Canada

COVER: CLAUDE T. PICARD, PARKS CANADA

Editor's note

A personal history mystery

It was July 1810 on the sweltering Mediterranean coast of Spain, and for a man known only as John David war and circumstance were about to forever alter his fate.

Europe was in turmoil. The French leader Napoleon Bonaparte, so used to victory, was finding the Peninsular War a bitter battle.

Smack in the middle was David, a new French recruit.

How did this young German from Düsseldorf — between eighteen and twenty years old and described as standing "five-feet-four-inches tall, of slight stature, oval visage, brown hair and grey eyes" — wind up so far from home, wearing the uniform of the 40th Regiment of the French Army?

THOMAS FISHER

Regardless of his motivations, records show that on July 7, 1810, John David was captured by the Spanish army near Valencia and then handed over to the British as a prisoner of war. He spent at least a year in the bowels of a British prison ship called *The Brune* and another two years in a prison camp near Edinburgh.

David's story might easily have ended there. Luckily, he would find new opportunity in the New World. I say luckily, because John David is my great-great-great-great-grandfather.

After three years, David was released on the condition that he serve in the 7th Battalion of the 60th Regiment (of Foot) of the British Army.

After arriving in Halifax on May 28, 1814, he was stationed at Fort Cumberland in northern Nova Scotia. David would eventually rise to the rank of sergeant, marry the commander's daughter, and raise a family in Fox Harbour, on the Northumberland Strait, a few kilometres from my childhood home.

David's story was uncovered by my cousin Ralph, the genealogist of the family. Indeed, people researching their ancestry are uncovering stories like this all the time. In the interest of helping you solve your own personal history mysteries, *The Beaver* is launching a new online resource for amateur genealogists.

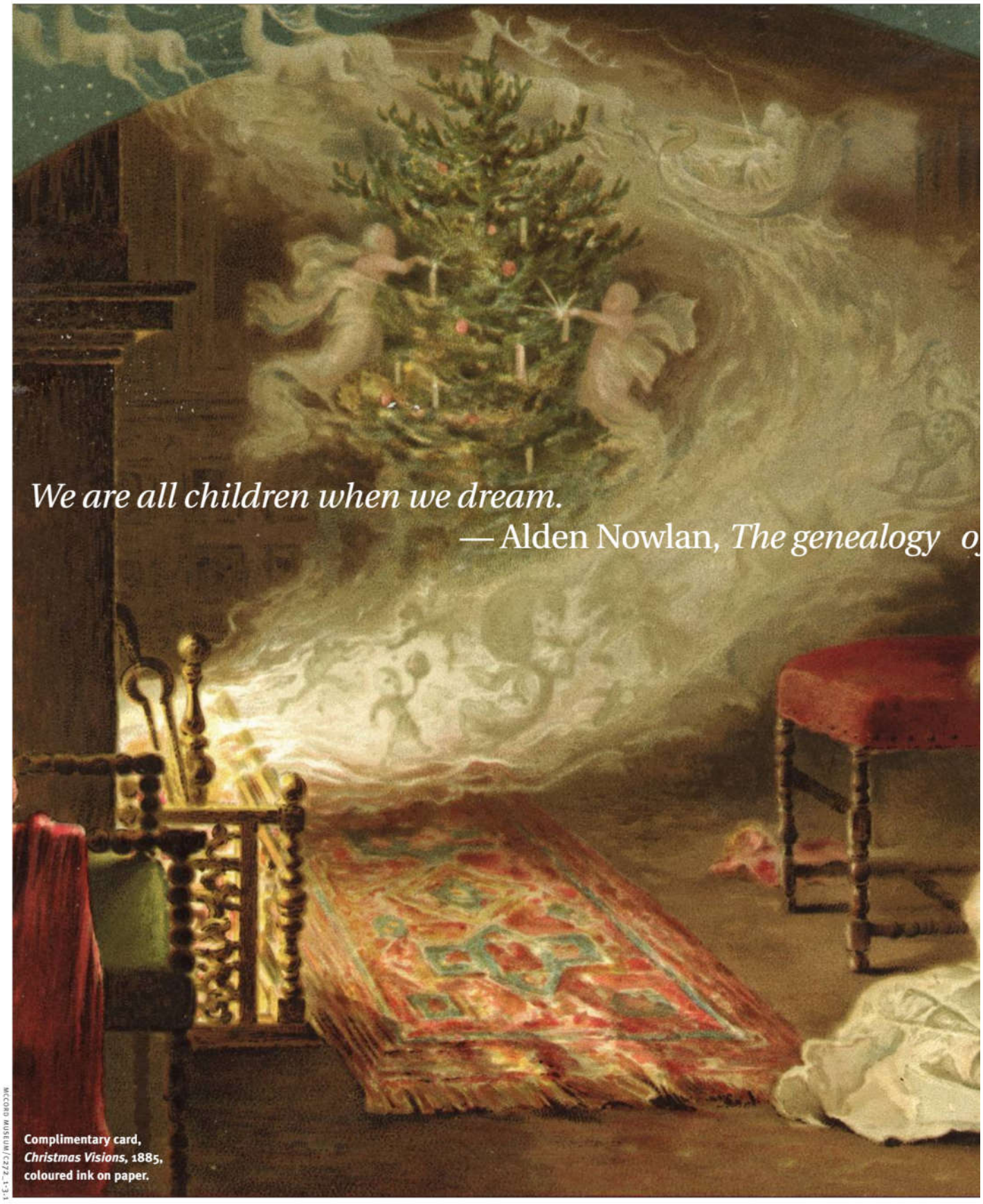
Go to TheBeaver.ca to find a link to our new Roots web page featuring past Roots columns, links to provincial genealogy sites, plus a forum where you can ask questions and discuss genealogy-related issues and topics.

Intended to complement the expert advice found in our regular Roots magazine column, our new genealogy web page is designed to become your main source of online information about genealogy in Canada and beyond.

In the coming months, we will also launch a revamped, user-friendly version of *The Beaver* website that will feature more content, more interactivity, and more opportunities for you to connect with the larger history community.

Until then, keep sending your genealogy questions to roots@historysociety.ca. We will post them on our Roots web page and help you find the information you need to explore the branches of your own family tree.

Mark Reid
Editor
editors@historysociety.ca



Complimentary card, *Christmas Visions*, 1885, coloured ink on paper.

MCCORD MUSEUM/C272_1-3-1

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Letters

The Beaver
CANADA'S HISTORY MAGA
WE REMEMBER
How the Great War changed everything:
The terrible trenches · The social upheaval
The first feminists · The art of war
EMBER
on the tumultuous legacy of the Great War

What's in a name

In reading the October/November 2008 issue of *The Beaver*, I was struck by your editor's note mention of "the average Canadian Tommy." Then, when I got to Tim Cook's "Hope in Hell" [part of the "We Remember" package], there it was again: "the Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, Newfoundland, and British Tommies."

I've always regarded "Tommy" as an informal or familiar term for a British soldier, more specifically an English private soldier of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, derived from the specimen British military forms of that period employing the generic "Tommy (Thomas) Atkins," just as various administrative specimen forms in North America today use "John Doe." During World War I, German, French, and British Commonwealth troops all commonly called English soldiers Tommies, often to their faces and not always as a snub or humiliation.

Your broad use of Tommy may be accurate, on the surface, in that Canadian, Australian, New Zealand, and Newfoundland soldiers in World War I were all "British" in the Commonwealth sense.

However, I think both the historical record and cultural practice over generations support a much narrower view of the British Tommy than that advanced (probably unwittingly) in your otherwise laudatory "We Remember" issue of *The Beaver*.

BRIAN MCFADZEN
DUNSFORD, ONTARIO

[Tim Cook responds: Surviving Canadian soldiers' letters and discourse reveal that Tommy was a popular and prevalent phrase for both British and Canadian soldiers, and often used affectionately. I suspect few Canadians would have bridled at being called Tommy during the Great War, as most were proud members of the Empire's fighting forces.]

Hunting for history

In the months following the 1837 Rebellion in Upper Canada, hundreds of men were arrested, alleged participants in that ill-fated insurrection. Imprisoned in Toronto's jail and awaiting trial, a number of them passed their time carving small wooden boxes. With pen and ink they wrote on them — loving mementos, affirmations of faith, or even political declarations. Until recently, these boxes have been seen simply as interesting personal artifacts, but without particular historical significance.

We are now beginning to see that these boxes are much more important than previously realized. They tell us what those poor men, after months of languishing in jail, were thinking and feeling.

With the help of two colleagues, I am creating an inventory of all known such boxes, describing each box and recording its inscriptions. The first instalment of the inventory, listing thirty-nine boxes, was published two years ago. Since then, we have "discovered" many more — seventy-seven different boxes to date — and we are sure that there are more.

If any reader of *The Beaver* owns, knows the whereabouts of, or has found references to any of these prisoner boxes, I would deeply appreciate their getting in touch with me.

Privacy, rest assured, will be strictly observed, and no box owner will be publicly identified without explicit permission.

CHRIS RAIBLE
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Pleasant paddling

I was visiting your website and noticed that you have recently published an article called "Kids in the Hull" [October/November 2008] regarding what was probably the last transit of the Peace River, in 1967, before the dam was built. As it happens, I recently found a number of old *Beaver* magazines. In the December 1952, Winter 1956, and Spring 1963 issues are articles about transiting the Peace River. They are fascinating.

My "discovery" of the Peace River by way of these ancient issues has made for some very enjoyable reading.

DONALD B. LE MESSURIER
CAVE CREEK, ARIZONA

Hockey nights in Calgary

The article on table hockey [Currents, October/November 2008] brought back very fond memories for me as a boy in Toronto. I received my Munro table hockey game when I was about ten years of age in 1942. I had this game for many years and when it finally became irreparable, due to hundreds of very hard games, it went into the garbage.

Fourteen years later, a fellow employee mentioned that as a child his favourite winter indoor game was table hockey, that he still had his Munro table hockey game, and that he was the champion of his street. I casually mentioned that I, too, was the champion of my street in years past.

He then suggested that my wife and I

should visit one evening and that he and I would play hockey while the ladies could chat.

This first evening developed into a weekly tournament, every Wednesday evening, for years. The ladies thought we were absolutely mad, but bought us a miniature Stanley Cup that became a prized trophy for the winner.

Thanks for the memories!

JACK STILES
CALGARY

Grave error

Regarding your article on Sam Steele ["Happy Birthday(s) Sam Steele," August/September 2008] and his gravestone in Winnipeg, which reads 1849 — it doesn't, it reads 1851.

JOHN R. THYEN
WINNIPEG

[*Mr. Thyen is correct. To see a photo of Steele's gravestone, go to: TheBeaver.ca.*]

Reader renewed

What a delight to start reading *The Beaver* again after all these years. As a young girl born in the United Kingdom, and coming to this country as a bride in 1946, history has always fascinated me.

A niece of mine was given copies of *The Beaver* and I just finished the last one — August/September 1998. I also bought August/September 2008. I am proud to be a Canadian, so I shall get new editions as they become available. Now, at eighty-seven years young, I can catch up on new editions. Keep up the good work.

JOY STOREY REID
SIDNEY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Prime ministerial pilgrim

In the August/September 2008 issue, Christopher Moore wrote: "I doubt any Canadian has ever made the full Canadian prime ministerial gravesite pilgrimage."

Well, here's one Canadian who has — at least all the graves in Canada. Bennett in England still eludes me. Picking my favourites is difficult, but for the sake of argument:

1. Lester Pearson at Wakefield, Quebec — a wonderfully understated site at a beautiful spot.

2. John Thompson in Halifax — it's memorable for the flowery grief that is etched onto his tombstone, reflecting the shock of his unexpected death at such a young age.

3. Robert Borden in Ottawa's Beechwood Cemetery — it's great because of the graveyard itself: an eccentric mix of Ottawa's founding capitalists, luminaries, and prominent lefties.

BARRY WILSON
LOW, QUEBEC

Battle over Bolsheviks

Regarding "After 1918: From Chaos to Mackenzie King!" October/November 2008, one would expect that Michael Bliss, one of Canada's foremost historians, would know better than to write about the year 1919 as the "the spectre of Bolshevik revolution, a bloody reality for tens of millions in Russia…."

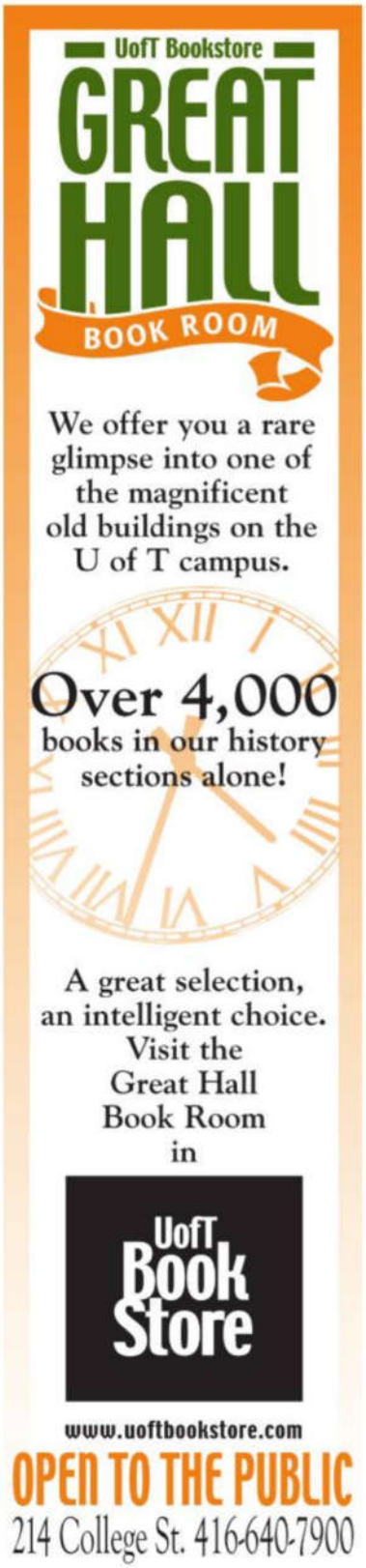
The actual overthrow of the Provisional government in Russia on October 25 and 26, 1917, resulted in less than ten deaths. The subsequent counter-revolution (civil war) from 1918 to 1921 between the White Armies, aided by a dozen countries, and the Red Army resulted in millions of dead due to direct and indirect causes, such as famine, disease, and pogroms.

The chaos in Russia after October 1917 was in part caused by Winston Churchill's desire that Bolshevism be "strangled in its cradle."

TED TURNER
TORONTO

[*Michael Bliss responds: Mr. Turner may believe that the Bolsheviks were little more than peaceful revolutionaries, but no one seems to have thought so at the time — or, for that matter, since.*]

***The Beaver* welcomes readers' comments.** E-mail us at editors@historysociety.ca or write to *The Beaver*, PO Box 56060 Portage Place RPO Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0G9 Canada. Please include your address and daytime phone number. Letters may be edited for clarity or length.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Parks Canada archaeologists work at York Factory National Historic Site in 2008. The person with the rifle is guarding against polar bears, which are a frequent hazard. The York Factory Depot is in the background.

PARKS CANADA

A river eats into it

One of Canada's most important historic sites is in danger of disappearing. York Factory stands like a lonely beacon on a windswept spot near the shore of Hudson Bay. Extremely remote, it is hard to imagine that this place was once a bustling trade centre, a headquarters for the Hudson's Bay Company, and an immigration gateway to Western Canada.

Yet with no road or rail line leading to it, few Canadians will ever see York Factory and nature threatens it from all sides. Each year the ever-widening Hayes River eats into more of the riverbank, sweeping away priceless archeological remains and threatening the one major building left standing. In addition, climate change is melting the permafrost, while the spreading roots of invasive willow impede proper drainage. If nothing is done, what remains of York Factory could vanish in a hundred years.

With this threat looming, the federal government is spending $1.75 million on a five-year research and engineering project aimed at finding ways to save York Factory National Historic Site.

"It's interesting that the problems of managing erosion and drainage at York Factory are not new — historical records show that the HBC wrestled with the same issues over the centuries," says Dawn Bronson, Parks Canada field unit superintendent for Manitoba. Researchers are trying to find practical, low-tech solutions used in the past that can also be applied today.

Parks Canada is two years into the project, which brings hydrologists, archaeologists, and other researchers on-site during the summer season.

Established in 1684, York Factory peaked in the mid-nineteenth century, with fifty buildings and several hundred people living there during trading season. From 1812 to the 1850s, it was the main entry point for immigrants to Western Canada.

The Hayes River, along which it was built, was a busy artery into the heart of the continent. Heavily laden York boats travelled it on their way to Lake Winnipeg and the Red River Settlement, a distance of almost a thousand kilometres.

York Factory's lively past stands in sharp contrast with its current state. Besides a handful of researchers who come and go, three Parks Canada employees are posted to the site in summer. It receives about 200 visitors a year, most arriving by small charter plane, although a few paddle in by canoe. Local First Nations also use it as a traditional gathering place.

While Canada has other significant historic sites in remote locations, none approach the importance of York Factory. This makes it crucial to preserve what is left of the site.

"The richness of its historical records and archaeological resources are unmatched anywhere in the country," says Bronson.

— Nelle Oosterom

TAKE THE DAY OFF

December 1
To honour the day in 1841 when the *Canadian Spelling Book* received the country's first copyright. Spell honour with a u.

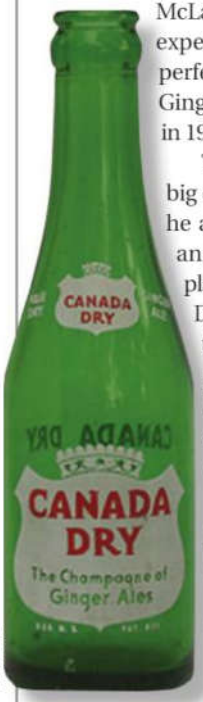
Currents

Our home & native ...

Canada Dry Ginger Ale

Canada Dry Ginger Ale, the bubbly, golden drink known and enjoyed around the world, had its beginnings in Toronto. John J. McLaughlin was an ambitious young man when he opened a small soda manufacturing plant in the city in 1890. A graduate of the University of Toronto with a gold medal in pharmacy, he began testing his own soda drink recipes.

In 1890, he created McLaughlin Belfast Style Ginger Ale after Irish ginger ales that originated a few decades earlier. He then developed a method to mass-bottle his gingery product, labelling it with a map of Canada and, yes, a beaver! Unhappy with the drink's dark colour and sharp taste, McLaughlin conducted further experiments until he had the perfect elixir, Canada Dry Pale Ginger Ale, which he patented in 1907.

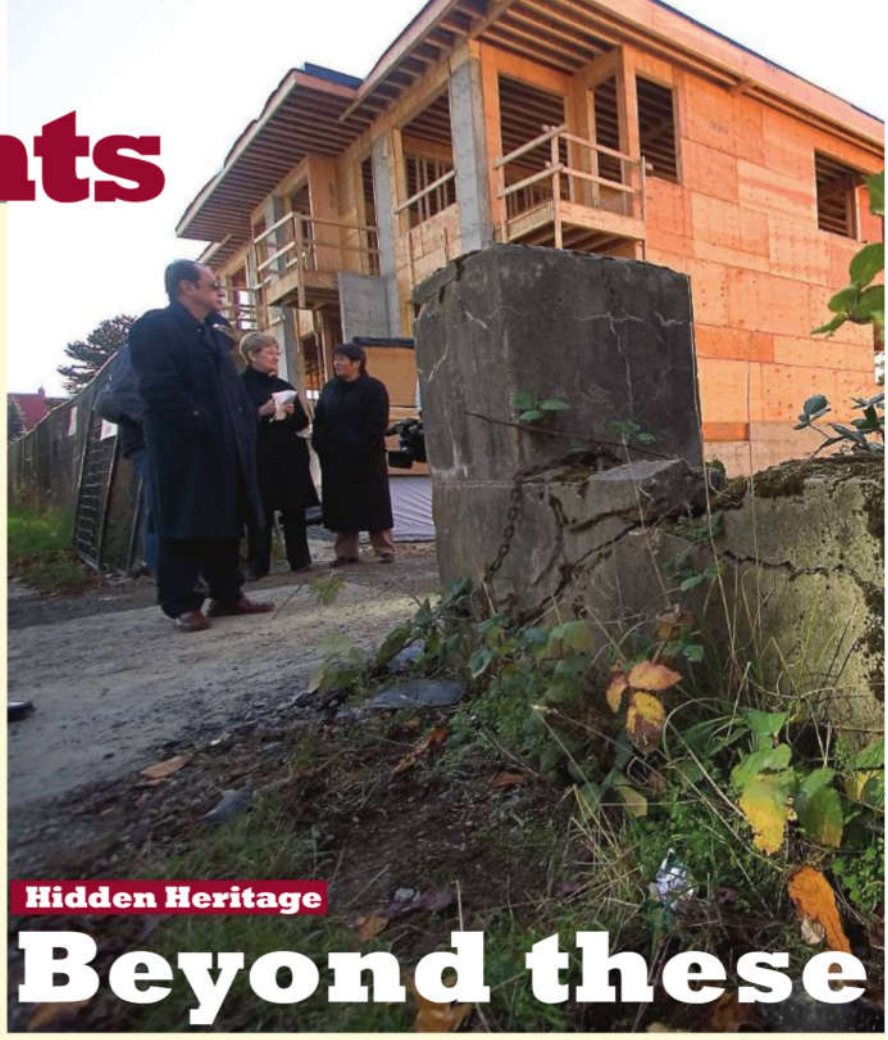


CANADA DRY

The Canadian market wasn't big enough for McLaughlin, so he approached U.S. interests, and in 1919 a Canada Dry plant was opened in New York. During the prohibition era of the 1930s, at the then-high price of thirty-five cents a bottle, the liquid was used as a mixer to mask the taste of homebrew.

With the same crisp, clean taste made famous by John McLaughlin, the "Champagne of Ginger Ales" is even said to cure stomach aches.

— Beverley Tallon



Hidden Heritage

Beyond these

After sitting vacant for three decades, a plot of land once called Victoria's most famous vacant lot today boasts new luxury townhouses. Yet, aside from those who pause to read the small commemorative plaque, few know that the site at the corner of Dallas Road and Ontario Street was the point of entry for many new Canadians and the beginning of a sad journey home for others.

As the twentieth century dawned, Victoria's port received a great diversity of immigrants. Not all were treated equally. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, antipathy toward Asians mounted due to competition for jobs and racial prejudice stemming from cultural differences. It culminated in 1885 with discriminatory legislation and screening requirements targeting Asians.

Then, in 1907, to regulate the flow of immigrants, the government built the Dominion Immigration Building. Although the facility processed newcomers of various nationalities, the large numbers from Asia prompted some to label the building the "Chinese Detention Shed."

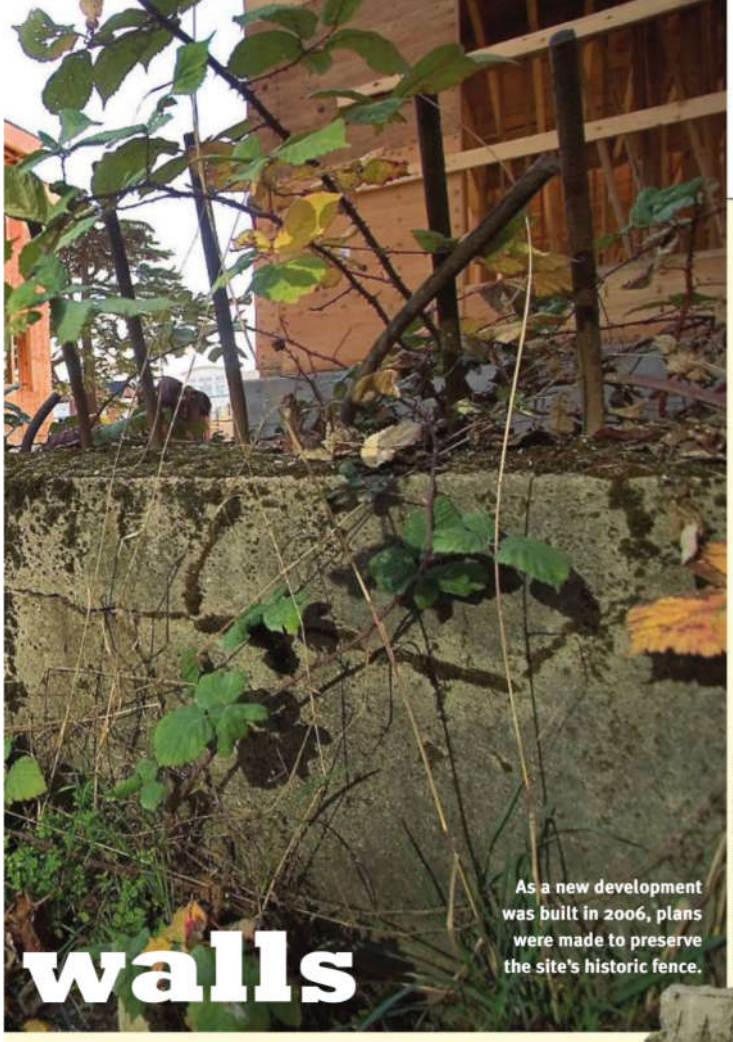
The majority of newcomers administered through the building were in fact Chinese, followed closely in number by Japanese. The building functioned as a processing station for conducting medical examinations, checking documenta-

December 17

To note the day in 1864 that passports were first required to enter the U.S. from British North America. Walk the line.

December 31

To celebrate the founding of the Sisters of Charity of Montreal, or Grey Nuns, by Marguerite d'Youville in 1737. Make a vow.



As a new development was built in 2006, plans were made to preserve the site's historic fence.

DARREN STONE, VICTORIA TIMES COLONIST

walls

tion, and issuing stamps of admittance to the country. Immigration officials also made decisions to detain and later deport those possessing fraudulent papers or suffering from poor health. Many arrivals were confined for days.

To prevent the escape of "undesirable" immigration candidates, the building was heavily fortified. Immigration officers performed double duty as administrators and guards; iron bars were welded over frosted windows and iron cages encased outer stairwells. Administrative protocol enforced racial segregation, with original building blueprints demarcating separate holding quarters for Chinese, Japanese, and East Indian immigrants.

Some detainees carved poetry into the building's walls, relaying, in their native languages, feelings of fear, disappointment, and despair. Several of these poems have been translated by Dr. David C. Lai and the wall sections are preserved by the Royal BC Museum. One poem reads:

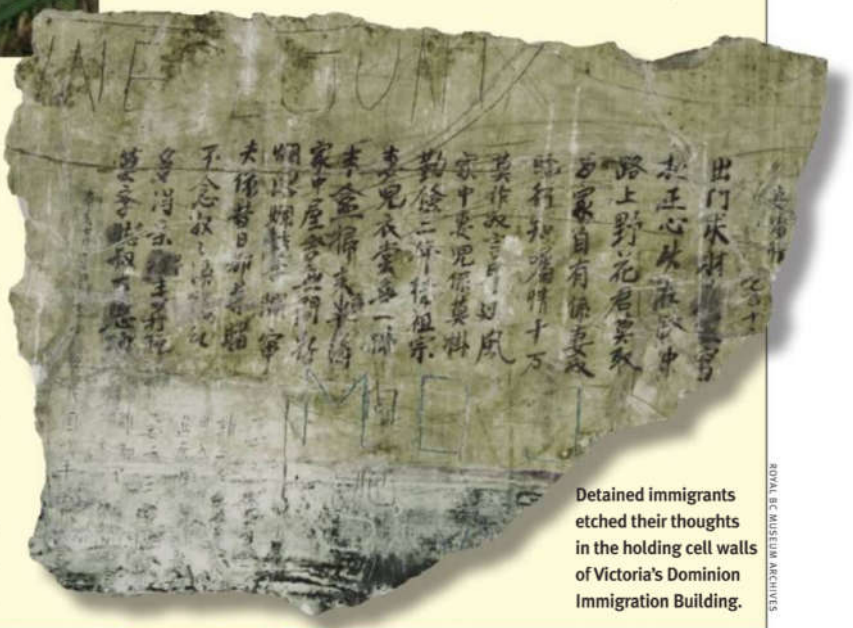
I can see neither the world outside nor my dear parents.
When I think of them, tears begin to stream down.
To whom can I confide my mournful sorrow,
But to etch in a few lines on this wall.

The holding cells were emptied in 1957, when the Immigration Building stopped receiving newcomers and a local business purchased the property. In 1977, the long-boarded-up building was slated for demolition. Two short-lived campaigns failed to halt the wrecking ball, and it eventually came down.

As another thirty years passed, Victoria's James Bay neighbourhood changed its face. The area sprouted luxury condominiums and seaside walking paths. Yet the Dallas Road property remained overgrown with long grasses, a few straggly bushes, and a couple of trees. The only sign of its history was an old, moss-covered fence of weathered concrete and iron.

When plans for a new townhouse project were unveiled in 2006, the developer agreed to preserve the fence and to erect a plaque commemorating the thousands who formally entered Canada through the Dominion Immigration Building. The plaque calls the building "a symbol of hope, often difficult hope, that one's life in a new land would be better than the old."

— Samantha J. Scott



Detained immigrants etched their thoughts in the holding cell walls of Victoria's Dominion Immigration Building.

ROYAL BC MUSEUM ARCHIVES

January 16

To remember the Dawson City Nuggets, who after travelling by dogsled, ship, and train lost their 1905 Stanley Cup challenge against the Ottawa Silver Seven. Put on your game face.

January 27

To mark the day in 1675 when King Charles II approved a charter for Newfoundland that prohibited settlers from dwelling or cutting down trees near the shore. See the forest and the trees.

Currents

Their storied pasts

CANADIAN MUSEUM OF FLIGHT

A young Dr. Jack Pickup, B.C.'s "flying doctor," stands beside his Waco aircraft, circa 1953.

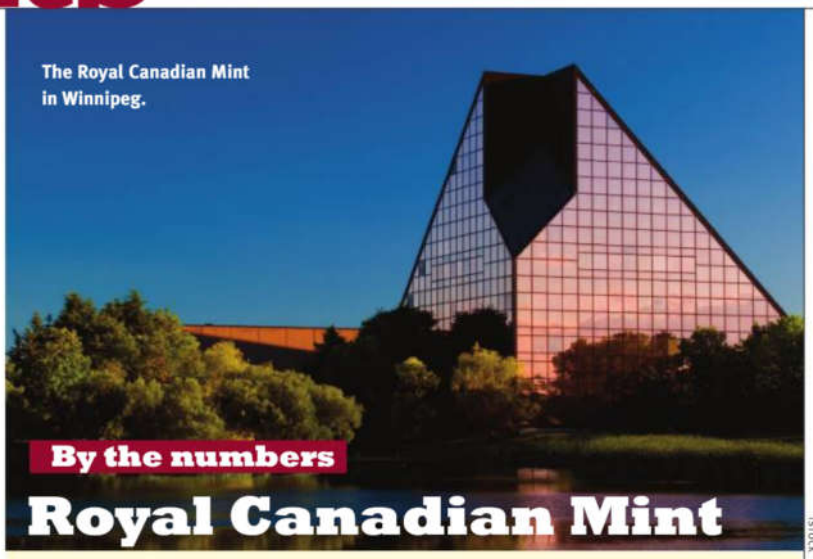
Any British Columbia resident with a history story to tell has been invited to tell it as part of B.C.'s 150th-anniversary celebrations this year. The result is The People's History project, part of the Free Spirit exhibition at the Royal BC Museum in Victoria.

The People's History features a variety of family stories handed down through the generations. Some are already well-known to B.C. residents — such as the story of pioneer settler "Cougar Annie," an expert gardener and big cat killer who outlasted four husbands. The "Peoples' version" is by her great-grandson, Mur Meadows, who pleads for an end to the "many myths and untruths" suggesting that one of Annie's husbands did not die accidentally.

Another famed story concerns Dr. Jack Pickup, B.C.'s "flying doctor," who taught himself to fly and then bought his own float plane so he could reach patients in remote locations. Other subjects are famous only to their families and friends, while some tales include pioneer encounters with frightening creatures, such as cougars, sasquatches, and Ogopogos!

To check out The People's History, go to TheBeaver.ca and follow the links. The exhibit is at the museum until January 11, 2009.

— **N. O.**



The Royal Canadian Mint in Winnipeg.

ISTOCK

By the numbers

Royal Canadian Mint

If there's any organization that can put the cent in centennial, it's the Royal Canadian Mint. Established in Ottawa in 1908 as the Canadian branch of England's Royal Mint, the mint today is renowned internationally. The original mint was located in Ottawa; a second facility opened in Winnipeg in 1976. The latter makes circulation coins for Canada and other countries, while the Ottawa mint specializes in collector coins.

50 The worth, in cents, of the first coin struck by the Royal Canadian Mint. The 1908 silver piece bore an effigy of King Edward VII.

256,000 The number of gold sovereigns produced in 1911, the first year the mint was fully operational.

15 million The number of circulation coins produced per day in 2008.

1 The number of canoes that appeared on the 1935 silver dollar — the first silver dollar coin produced by the mint

60 The number of foreign countries for which the mint has produced coinage.

1920 The year the mint dumped its large-size one-cent coin in favour of a smaller American-sized penny.

1937 The year the beaver first appeared on the Canadian nickel.

100 The weight, in kilograms, of a giant maple leaf coin struck in 2007 for promotional purposes. It has a face value of $1 million.

Call to arms

Canada's National History Society joined a time-honoured tradition when it received its own armorial bearings this year. While such honours are granted in this country only at the discretion of the Governor General and the Canadian Heraldic Authority, any Canadian individual or incorporated organization can apply to receive their own coat of arms.

"Generally, we are issuing between eighty to one hundred Letters Patents each year," says Darrel Kennedy, a herald of arms at the Heraldic Authority. "This includes all of the categories of individuals, military units, governmental departments, municipalities, and for-profit and not-for-profit incorporated bodies."

Until 1988, Canadians had to apply overseas for arms. But that year, after the Queen authorized the creation of a Canadian office for granting arms, the Canadian Heraldic Authority was formed and a Chief Herald of Canada appointed under the direction of the Governor General.

Armorial bearings are available in three categories: coats of arms, flags, and badges. A decision to grant armorial bearings recognizes contributions to the community, both in Canada and elsewhere.

History Society president Deborah Morrison says the idea of applying for arms was looked on as a way of recognizing that the society — which today publishes *The Beaver* — now has a history of its own. The History Society turns fifteen in 2009.

"The history of heraldry is fascinating, as we all discovered going through the process of selecting colours and animals," Morrison said. In the History Society's coat of arms, for instance, the paddles and beavers refer to the fur trade that opened up the country, while the lit candle symbolizes education and historical narratives.

Kevin Greaves, a heraldry expert and past president of the Royal Heraldry Society of Canada, says individuals seek personal coats of arms because they are unique statements of identity and history. "People like the idea that they are more than just a number in a system. They want something that tells a story, something that's timeless and has deep personal meaning," Greaves says.

Grants of armorial bearings are intended to be valid forever. Morrison recognizes that the History Society's coat of arms "is going to be a very long-standing defining object that gives you a lot of your identity as an organization — so we didn't treat it lightly."

Its first use is on new medals given to recipients of the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. Visit TheBeaver.ca for more on Canadian heraldry and the History Society coat of arms.

— Phil Koch and Chris Webb

The Beaver is making a Splash!

COURTESY BREAKTHROUGH FILMS & TELEVISION

Canadian Spitfire pilot Ian Maclennan received a hero's welcome while filming a History Television documentary in Malta.

The notion of *history news* might seem an oxymoron, but it's exactly what you find every two months in *The Beaver*'s Currents section. Yet if these pages aren't enough to satisfy your cravings, now you can get a weekly hit of Canadian history news online at TheBeaver.ca.

Our News Splash! is updated every Friday morning and will keep you informed of the latest discoveries, events, commemorations, and celebrations of Canadian history. We also tell about significant anniversaries and amusing incidents from our country's storied past.

Replica of a mosasaur, like the one unearthed near Morden, Manitoba.

COURTESY CANADIAN FOSSIL DISCOVERY CENTRE

The first months of the News Splash! have seen sea creatures and shipwrecks; warplanes and streetcars; artifacts exhibited and stolen; and immigrants celebrated and turned away. Read about all this and more in the News Splash! Archives — and if you don't want to find yourself on the tail end of history news, check out the latest edition of *The Beaver*'s News Splash! every week.

— P. K.

In

A scene from *Le duel des fondateurs*, a theatrical production staged during Quebec's 400th anniversary celebrations in 2008. In the play, actors portraying Pierre Dugua de Mons (left) and Samuel de Champlain (right), debate who is the true founder of Quebec.

If ever anything good comes out of New France, posterity will owe it to Sieur de Monts, who was the author of these things.

– Marc Lescarbot, early French colonist writing in 1607

the Shadow of Champlain

Huguenot nobleman Pierre Dugua de Mons was once hailed as the founder of Quebec. Now he's just a footnote in history. Was religion the reason? by Patrick Donovan

Although his peers claimed he laid the foundations for our country, few know of Pierre Dugua de Mons today. He is virtually ignored in Quebec City, which he helped found. This is surprising, since history traditionally glorifies the wealthy and privileged, and de Mons was a high-ranking nobleman who financed some of Canada's earliest settlements. But he has become a footnote, with his lieutenant and employee Samuel de Champlain getting the glory.

Why was de Mons marginalized by generations of historians? Two reasons: He was a Huguenot Protestant and he left no writings. Recently, however, a dedicated few have tried to restore de Mons' place in history.

Pierre Dugua de Mons was born in the coastal city of Royan, France, around 1560. He grew up in the midst of the Wars of Religion as a member of the Protestant elite. In his early twenties, he fought in Normandy to defend Protestantism, raiding Catholic encampments near Protestant strongholds. His actions led to several victories and when the fighting ended, he was given a promotion. This made him one of a few dozen men eligible to enter the chambers of King Henri IV, the Protestant heir who, for political reasons, converted to Catholicism upon

LOUISE BILODEAU

With peace established, France again became interested in world exploration. The first state-sanctioned journeys were the expeditions of one of de Mons' war colleagues, the Protestant Pierre Chauvin, in 1599 and 1600. De Mons accompanied Chauvin to the New World, going "for his own pleasure" according to Champlain's *Voyages*. Chauvin set up a year-round trading post at Tadoussac, several hundred kilometres northeast of what would be Quebec City. The French traded glass beads, guns, and metal implements in exchange for furs. De Mons returned to France in the fall, but sixteen traders remained. Only five survived the harsh winter.

The adventure piqued de Mons' interest. He sold his properties and financed a colonial endeavour in exchange for exclusive rights to trade with the native peoples for ten years. Henry IV gave de Mons absolute authority over a coastal area stretching from present-day Cape Breton to Philadelphia.

Little is written about de Mons' personality, but historian George MacBeath suggests in the *Canadian Dictionary of Biography* that he was very thorough in his preparations and a determined, energetic leader. Nor were his interests purely commercial, as he took a keen interest in collecting specimens of animals and plants, as well as native artifacts, and seemed willing to risk large sums of his personal fortune to invest in settlement.

In 1604, de Mons sailed from France with Champlain and nearly one hundred male settlers. They chose Île Sainte-Croix, a tiny island in the Bay of Fundy situated on today's American side of the New Brunswick/Maine border, as a place to settle because it provided protection from native peoples.

However, in winter the island became a prison. Getting to the mainland to hunt was nearly impossible due to treacherous ice floes. The settlers' wood supply was quickly exhausted and their cider and wine froze. Almost half of the colonists succumbed to the cold and to scurvy. Settler Marc Lescarbot hypothesized that the disease flourished due to the lack of sexual activity in an all-male settlement. The true cause, vitamin C deficiency, was not understood for many decades.

The colony moved to the mainland a year later. This settlement, Port-Royal, proved better, serving as the basis for today's town of Annapolis Royal on the Nova Scotia coast. Settlers built a single enclosed *habitation* around a fortified square. It was around that time that Lescarbot wrote a play entitled *le Théâtre de Neptune en la Nouvelle-France*, an ode to French colonialism promising that the "immortal renown" of Pierre Dugua de Mons would be ensured throughout the world.

In France, de Mons' monopoly began to arouse protests. Breton fishermen, who also traded furs, complained that de Mons' men "take vessels from merchants, con-

FRANCIS BACK/SAINT CROIX INTERNATIONAL HISTORIC SITE

In the winter, the island succumbed to the cold

BIBLIOTHÈQUE ET ARCHIVES NATIONALES DU QUÉBEC

A map of Île Sainte-Croix made by Samuel de Champlain in 1613.

Island of regrets

Pierre Dugua de Mons' shoreline reconnaissance around the Bay of Fundy eventually led to the ill-fated settlement on Île Sainte-Croix. He must have regretted flitting by the Annapolis Basin, a region he had called "delightful." The Annapolis Basin would have sheltered the settlers, and not left them open to the elements.

became a prison... Almost half of the colonists and to scurvy.

The first French settlers build shelter on Île Sainte-Croix in this drawing by Francis Back, an illustrator and historian based in Montreal. The settlers would soon abandon Île Sainte-Croix and move to the mainland of present-day Nova Scotia.

fiscate them and make the people poor and miserable, a result far different from the wish of Your Majesty." Parisian hatters joined the protest, fearful that a monopoly would raise prices. De Mons had to return to France to defend his empire and finances. His balance books showed significant losses in the Port-Royal adventure, largely due to pillaging and illegal trade by unlicensed merchants of various nationalities, including French.

The king sided with de Mons until the Dutch protested that de Mons' men, in attempting to enforce de Mons' monopoly, had seized furs from their ships. The Dutch had a strong navy and were France's allies against Spain, so the king had little choice but to revoke de Mons' monopoly in 1607. The settlers returned to France and a Mi'kmaq chief was left in charge at Port-Royal. The region was recolonized in 1610.

But new problems threatened French colonization. The king feared English claims to North America when, in 1607, the British founded Jamestown, located in present-day Virginia. In 1608, he renewed de Mons' monopoly for a year, on the pledge that de Mons would establish another post and renew his efforts to colonize the new land. After discussions with Champlain, de Mons decided on a settlement along the St. Lawrence.

He paid for the expedition, chartered the ships, and recruited the settlers, but stayed in France to defend his monopoly. He made Champlain his lieutenant, giving him power over his North American territory in absentia.

Champlain and about thirty settlers landed at the site that would become Quebec City on July 3, 1608. They cleared a spot at the foot of Cap au Diamant. Champlain called the site "Mont du Gas" in honour of his benefactor. The men constructed three buildings surrounded by a moat with a drawbridge and stockade, laying the foundations of the eventual capital of New France. A ravaging winter followed, killing more than two-thirds of the settlers.

The king did not renew de Mons' monopoly the following spring, as his settlement efforts were seen as unsuccessful. Thus, the North American fur trade was thrown open to competition. This put the Quebec colony in jeopardy

Champlain gets the glory

Below, The Champlain monument in Quebec City.

Below right, A page of the *codex Canadiensis* by the Jesuit Louis Nicolas (1664–1675).

It stands proudly beside the famed Chateau Frontenac, commemorating one man's determined drive to create a thriving French colony along the St. Lawrence.

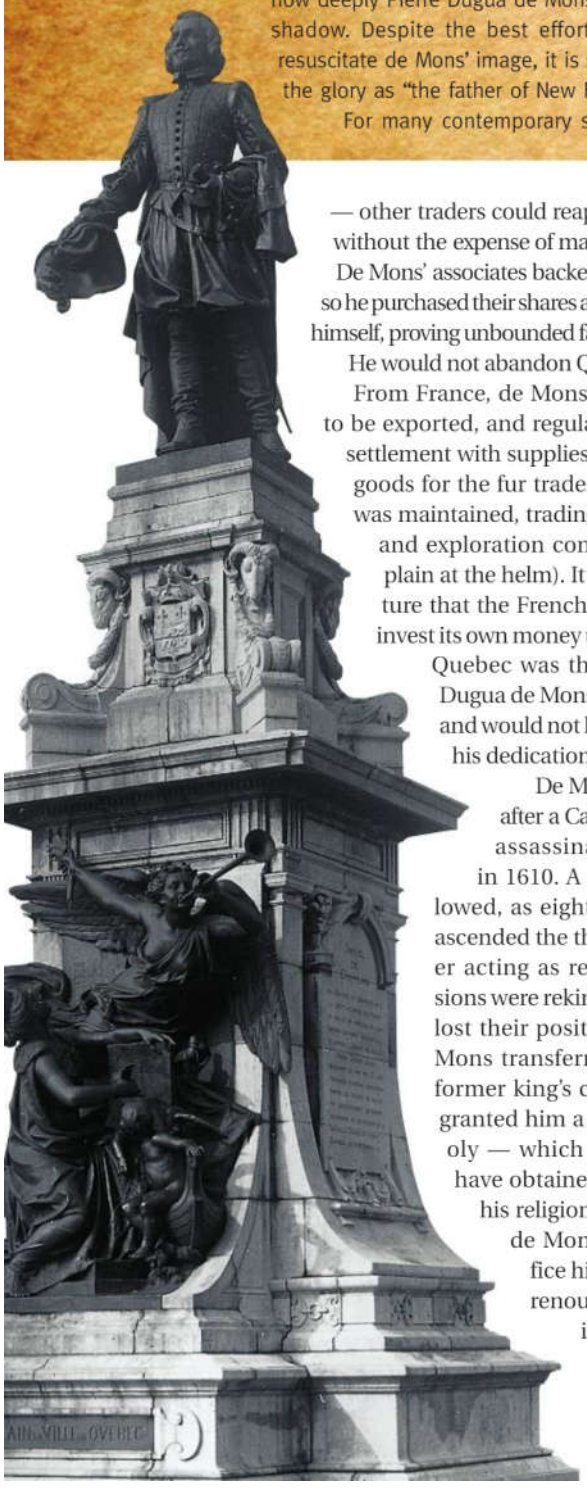
The statue of Samuel de Champlain certainly holds a place of honour in Quebec City. It has stood front and centre this past year throughout the many festivities and events marking the 400th anniversary of the founding of Quebec.

It also stands as a vivid and tangible reminder of just how deeply Pierre Dugua de Mons remains in Champlain's shadow. Despite the best efforts of those who would resuscitate de Mons' image, it is still Champlain who gets the glory as "the father of New France."

For many contemporary scholars, there is simply no debate.

"The unfortunate Pierre Dugua de Mons is being brought out of the closet..." writes Denis Vaugeois, co-editor of Champlain: *The Birth of French America*. "[However,] one thing is clear — even if he is too strong a personality for some tastes, it is Samuel de Champlain who is responsible for founding Quebec."

Indeed, Vaugeois argues that if there's anyone who deserves to share Champlain's crown, it's Francois Dupont-Gravé. He was a colleague of both Champlain and de Mons, and helped convince the Huguenot to refocus his attention from the Bay of Fundy to the St. Lawrence River. He also worked alongside Champlain for thirty years helping to build the colony of Quebec City.



— other traders could reap the benefits of trade without the expense of maintaining a settlement. De Mons' associates backed out of the operation, so he purchased their shares and financed the colony himself, proving unbounded faith in the enterprise.

He would not abandon Quebec.

From France, de Mons arranged for timber to be exported, and regularly sent ships to the settlement with supplies for the colonists and goods for the fur trade. The post at Quebec was maintained, trading contacts expanded, and exploration continued (with Champlain at the helm). It was such a risky venture that the French government did not invest its own money until many years later. Quebec was the property of Pierre Dugua de Mons for its first five years, and would not have survived without his dedication.

De Mons' fortunes changed after a Catholic religious fanatic assassinated King Henri IV in 1610. A period of unrest followed, as eight-year-old Louis XIII ascended the throne, with his mother acting as regent. Religious tensions were rekindled and Protestants lost their positions of privilege. De Mons transferred his power to the former king's cousin and the court granted him a twelve-year monopoly — which de Mons could not have obtained himself because of his religion. A man of principle, de Mons preferred to sacrifice his empire, rather than renounce his religion. Back in France, he concentrated on his work as governor of the small Protestant stronghold of Pons (a post to which he was appointed in 1610 by Henry IV), located about forty kilometres inland from his birthplace on the Atlantic Coast. He retired in 1617.

Although he had lost all power and retained only minor

GILCREASE MUSEUM, TULSA OK, USA

MCCORD MUSEUM

Collector's items

De Mons amassed a collection of animals, birds, and other artifacts, which he brought back to France. Scientist Nicolas de Peirese studied and gave descriptions to de Mons' collection, providing some of the earliest data Europeans had of North America's natural history.

shares in the colony after 1613, de Mons' involvement continued beyond retirement. For instance, he encouraged Louis Hébert, who became the first person to settle permanently in Quebec with his family and farm the land. And in 1619 he rode to Paris to defend Champlain's rule when the colony came under threat from a company more interested in trade than settlement. In 1628, while the colony was still precarious and numbering fewer than one hundred, Pierre Dugua de Mons died.

With de Mons' death, proper acknowledgement of his role in the founding of Quebec also died. His Protestant background led to his marginalization by historians. In 1627, a year before de Mons died, Cardinal Richelieu ordained that only Catholics could settle in New France, as Protestants were thought to be conspiring with the English. This edict set the tone for future historical interpretations of de Mons' contributions. Jesuits, the colony's early historians, heaped praise on Champlain and diminished de Mons' role. In 1858, the Quebec newspaper *La Minerve* dismissed him outright, declaring: "It is to Catholicism only that the Canadien people owe their nationality."

The twentieth century saw growing recognition and commemoration of de Mons. With the marking of the tercentenary of the founding of Acadia in 1904, a monument to de Mons was erected in Annapolis Royal. But there was no mention of de Mons at the 300th anniversary of Quebec City in 1908. The Société Historique de Québec and former Canadian ambassador Jean-Yves Grenon worked to correct this oversight for the 400th anniversary in 2008. In preparation, a plaque dedicated to de Mons was unveiled in 1999 near the original site of Champlain's *habitation*.

Historian Marcel Trudel wrote that without Pierre Dugua de Mons there would be no Champlain. There would also have been no French Canada, certainly not as we know it today. De Mons' zeal, effort, and personal fortune laid the groundwork for a French presence in North America.

Patrick Donovan is a native of Quebec City and works for the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec. He has a masters degree in historic preservation and is a part-time musician and a regular contributor to www.urbanphoto.net.

Et Cetera

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Pierre Dugua, sieur de Mons by Jean Liebel, Le Croît vif, Paris, 1999.

To learn more about Pierre Dugua de Mons, go to: thebeaver.ca.

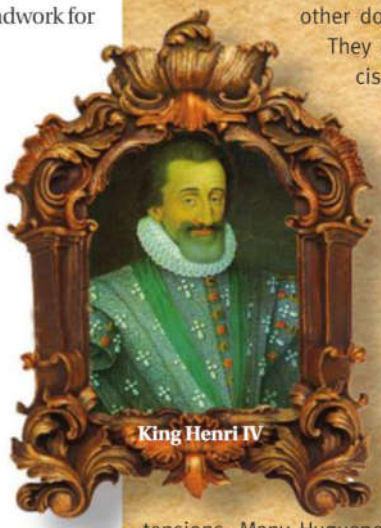
MUSEE DES AUGUSTINS, TOULOUSE, FRANCE/ THE BRIDGEMAN ART LIBRARY

***Expulsion of the Huguenots of Toulouse after the Capture of the town by the Prince of Conde's Supporters in 1562*, a painting by Antoine Rivalz, 1727.**

The Wars of Religion

The Wars of Religion dominated the second half of the sixteenth century. Protestants, known in France as Huguenots, periodically ransacked the churches of Catholics, and vice versa. Tensions were high and the pressure increased when Henri de Navarre, a distant Protestant relative of King Henri III, was appointed heir to the throne. Although Huguenots were a minority, they were numerous among educated nobles and city dwellers, such as Pierre Dugua de Mons.

Huguenots refuted the priesthood, sacramental theology, and other doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. They became known for their vehement criticisms of Catholic rituals of worship, in particular the focus on death and the afterlife. The rituals, saints, pilgrimages, prayers, and structure of the Catholic Church were, in their view, meaningless practices toward seeking redemption. Huguenots believed faith was expressed more honestly by living a strict and godly life in accordance with Biblical laws, and by expressing gratitude for God's mercy.

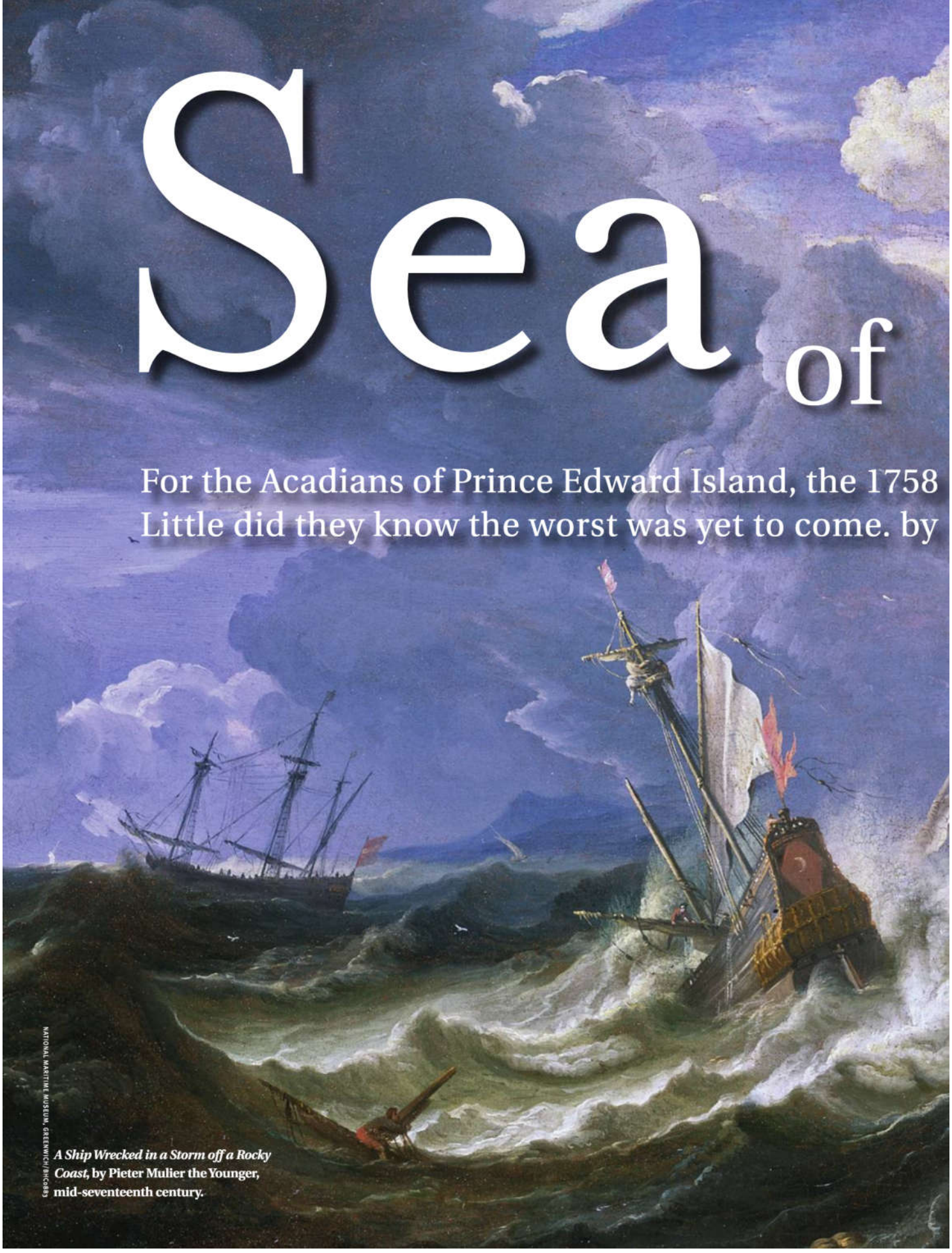


King Henri IV

Their criticisms antagonized the Catholic establishment. Around 1555, the first Huguenot church was founded in Paris, which escalated religious tensions. Many Huguenots were persecuted and forced to flee France, while others, such as a young Pierre Dugua de Mons, took their objections to the streets, attacking and tearing down Catholic structures, including altars and buildings. Bourges, Montauban, and Orléans suffered particularly. In 1562, more than one thousand Huguenots were killed at Vassey, leading to the French Wars of Religion, which devastated France over the four following decades. — **P.D.**

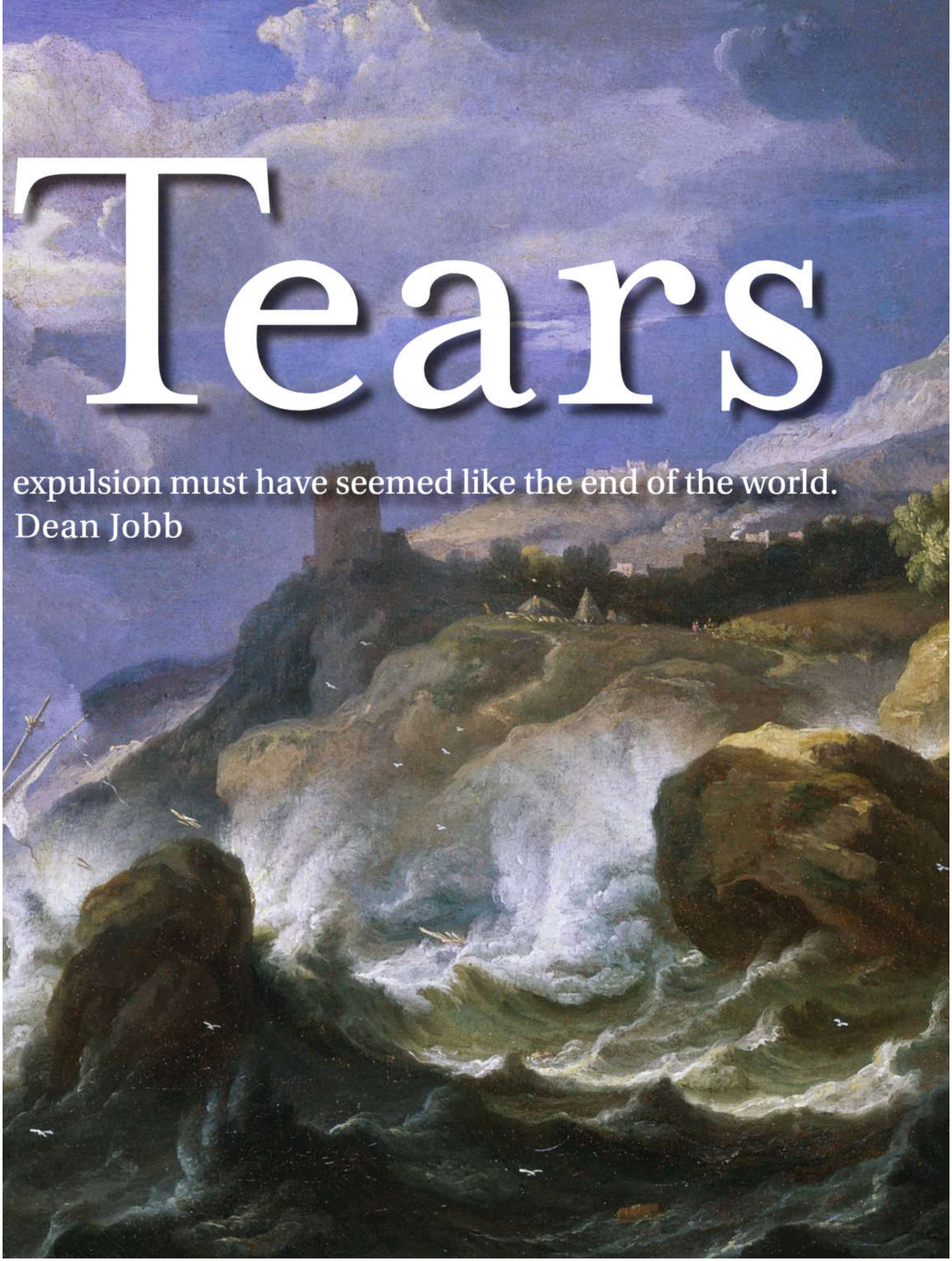
Sea of

For the Acadians of Prince Edward Island, the 1758
Little did they know the worst was yet to come. by



NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH/BHC0885

A Ship Wrecked in a Storm off a Rocky Coast, by Pieter Mulier the Younger, mid-seventeenth century.


Tears
expulsion must have seemed like the end of the world.
Dean Jobb

For days the relentless North Atlantic had been battering the little fleet of transports. Gale-force winds from the northwest had torn at canvas and rigging since they emerged from the Gulf of St. Lawrence. The swells rose as high as mountains and, as November slipped into December, the cold rain was often laced with sleet.

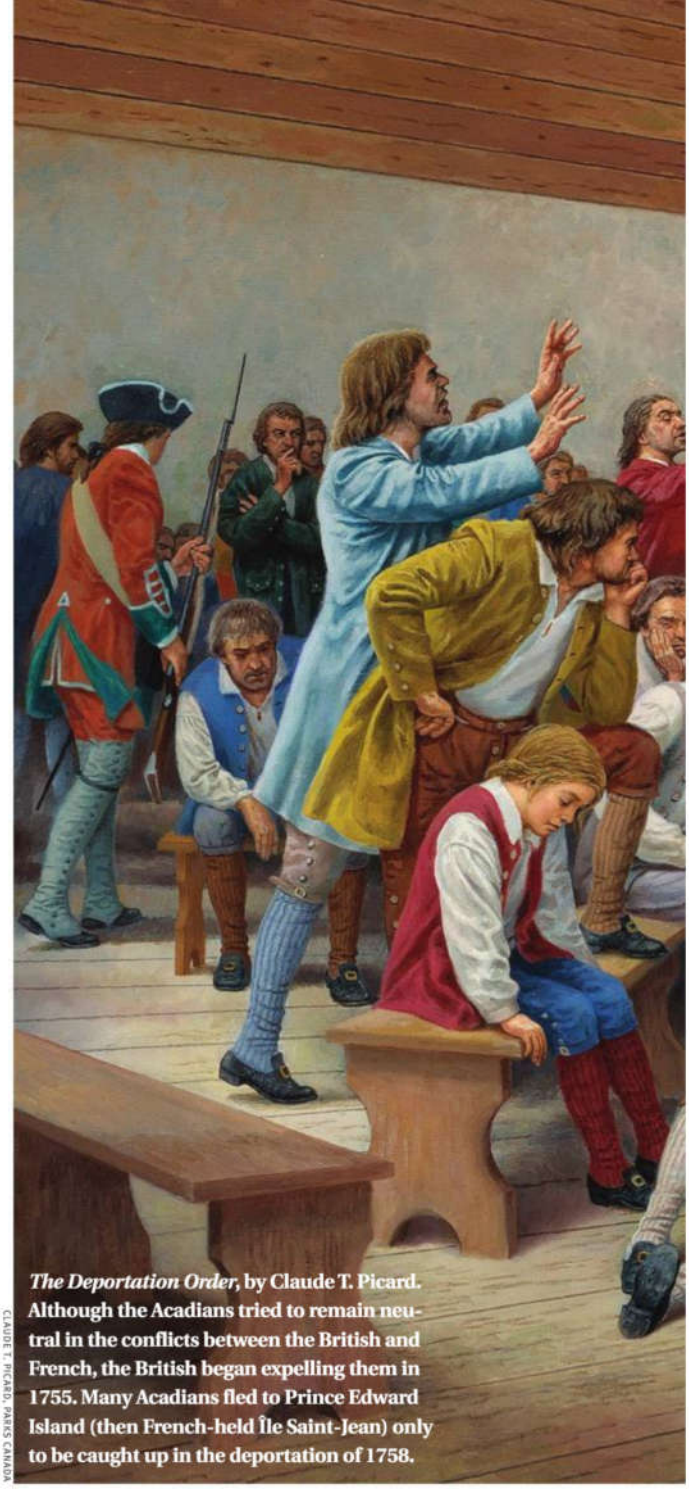
On board the *Duke William*, the largest of the ships bound for France, Captain William Nichols ordered the ship's carpenter to go below every half hour to check for leaks. He had already crossed the Atlantic once this year, 1758, to ferry British Redcoats from Ireland, to Halifax, and on to Louisbourg, where they had helped besiege and capture the French fortress in July. On the return trip his hold was filled with Acadian families — more than 300 men, women, and children — being deported from Île Saint-Jean (present-day Prince Edward Island). Nichols had accepted the charter despite misgivings about his vessel's condition and, as he confided to the captain of another ship, "the impossibility ... of his arriving safe in Old France at that season of the year."

The heavy seas scattered the transports, but on December 10 the *Duke William* spotted sails on the horizon. It was the *Violet*, carrying 400 Acadians. The captain of the *Violet* reported he was "in a terrible situation" and taking on water. Nichols promised to stand by but soon faced a crisis of his own. A powerful wave opened a seam in the *Duke William*'s hull. As dawn broke on December 12 and Acadian prisoners helped Nichols' crew work the pumps, they were horrified to see the *Violet* listing badly and lying deep in the water. A violent squall struck, and within ten minutes the *Violet* and all aboard were gone. The disaster "shocked even the stoutest on board the *Duke William*," by one account, "as a similar fate was now threatening them."

It has been 250 years since General Jeffrey Amherst, commander of the British expedition against Louisbourg, ordered the removal of the Acadian inhabitants of Île Saint-Jean. Their fate has long been overshadowed by the deportation of more than 6,000 Acadians from mainland Nova Scotia to the American colonies three years earlier, in 1755. Most historians refer to the 1758 deportation only in passing; no Longfellow emerged to commemorate the events in verse (as in his epic poem *Évangeline*). Yet the result was a human catastrophe that rivalled the hardships and suffering that befell the initial wave of deportees. Of the estimated 3,000 Acadians deported from Île Saint-Jean, more than half perished in shipwrecks or died of disease.

Caught by a violent squall, the transport ship *Violet* began listing badly. Within ten minutes, all aboard were gone.

Europeans first settled on the island in the 1720s, when the Gallants and a few other Acadian families from the Chignecto region of Nova Scotia joined the French fishermen who used harbours on the north shore as a base. A small French garrison was stationed at Port-la-Joye — on a site opposite today's capital, Charlottetown — but the population stood at barely 700 when



CLAUDE T. PICARD, PARKS CANADA

***The Deportation Order*, by Claude T. Picard. Although the Acadians tried to remain neutral in the conflicts between the British and French, the British began expelling them in 1755. Many Acadians fled to Prince Edward Island (then French-held Île Saint-Jean) only to be caught up in the deportation of 1758.**

the British took control after capturing Louisbourg in 1745. A peace treaty returned the island, as well as Louisbourg, to France in 1748; but poor harvests and plagues of mice left the inhabitants struggling to support themselves, let alone hundreds of Acadian newcomers fleeing British rule in Nova Scotia. "Almost all are in need," a French priest warned in a 1753 letter pleading for aid from France. "The nakedness which is almost universal and extreme afflicts them sore.... They cannot protect themselves from the cold either by day or by night."

***Sir Jeffrey Amherst,* by Sir Joshua Reynolds, circa 1768.**

Expulsion of the Acadians, by Lewis Parker.

An estimated 1,700 Acadians died during the deportation from Île Saint-Jean. They were the victims of poor planning and British commanders so callous they thought nothing of tossing destitute people to the mercy of the North Atlantic during the stormiest season of the year.

The deportation of 1755 brought a flood of new refugees from Nova Scotia, among them the eventual passengers of the *Duke William*, who had fled their farms along the shore of Cobequid Bay and settled at Pointe Prime, near Port-la-Joye. The population swelled to more than 4,000, many of them huddled in crude huts and subsisting on government rations. "Most of the inhabitants are without bread," the governor of Quebec, the Marquis de Vaudreuil, noted in a dispatch to Paris. By 1758, when the British again took control of Île Saint-Jean during the Seven Years War, the island Acadians, in the words of geographer Andrew Hill Clark, were "an ailing, starving, completely dispirited folk."

Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Rollo was dispatched to Port-la-Joye that August with 500 soldiers and orders from Amherst to crush any opposition. There was none. The small French garrison surrendered without a fight and the commandant, Gabriel Rousseau de Villejouin, realized he "could not advise the

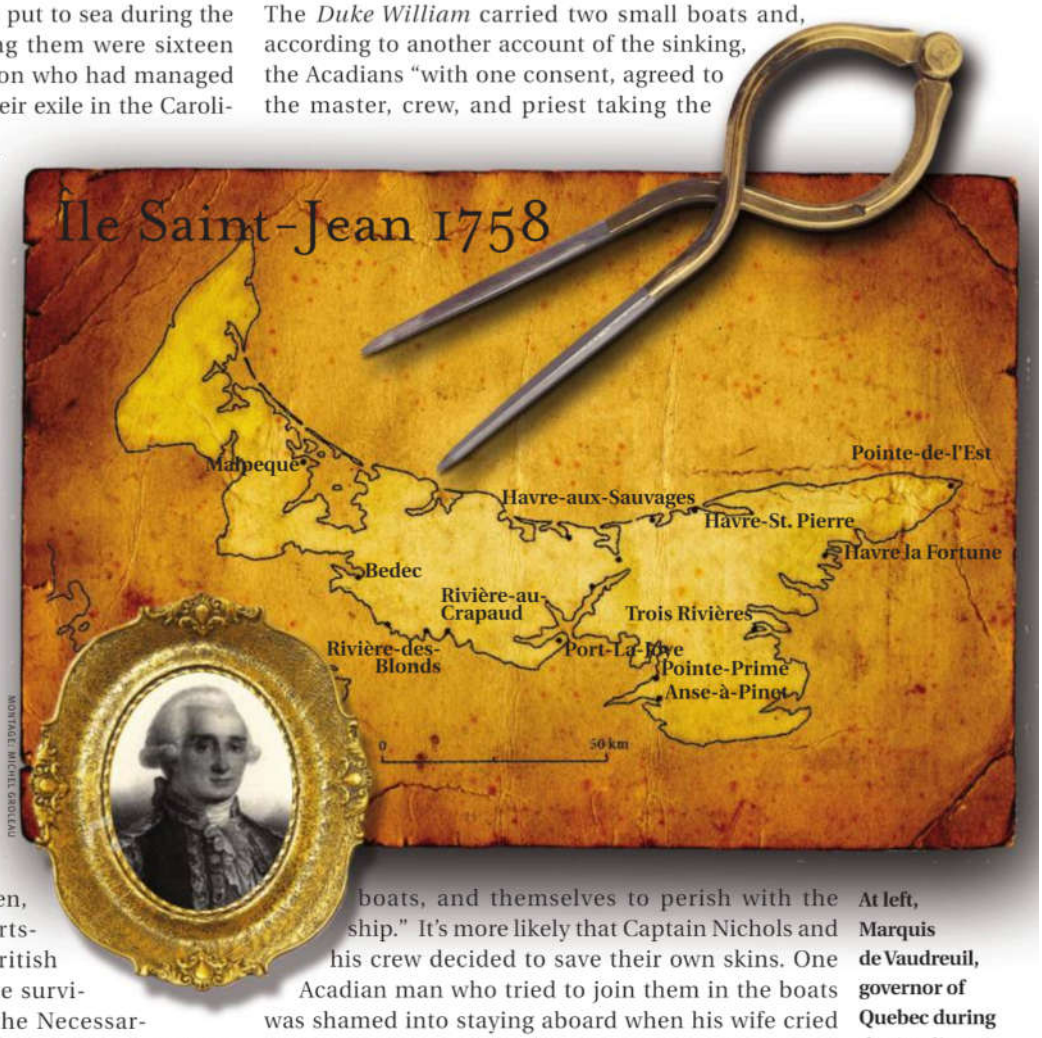
habitants to take up arms without exposing them to the fury of the conqueror." The Acadians begged to remain on their lands and were allowed to send two priests to Louisbourg to present a petition. But Rollo's discovery of scalps in Villejouin's quarters confirmed suspicions that the island had been a base for native raids, backed by the French, on the British settlement at Halifax. While the Acadians were innocent bystanders, Amherst concluded they were "not to be trusted by us in their settlements." They would be sent to France as planned. "As I do it for the best," Amherst told a fellow officer, "I hope it will meet with approbation in England."

Rollo had rounded up and deported about 700 Acadians by the end of August, but the British had grossly underestimated the number of Acadians on the island. More transports were dispatched and ships bearing another 2,150 Acadians put to sea during the first week of November. Among them were sixteen survivors of the 1755 deportation who had managed to make their way back from their exile in the Carolinas. The British were forced to leave behind the inhabitants of the remote Malpeque parish as well as a large number a naval officer described as "sickly and most of them Women and Children." Others went into hiding and as many as 1,500 managed to escape by boat to a refugee camp in the French-held Miramichi region of present-day New Brunswick. Conditions there were so desperate that some returned to face deportation, "preferring," Villejouin noted, "to abandon everything than to die of hunger."

Storms and disease stalked the ships as they crossed the Atlantic. One diverted to Portsmouth, England, with its passengers "in great distress, being in want of fresh Provisions and very Sickly." At least 250 of the 560 Acadians aboard the *Mary*, most of them children, died before it limped into Portsmouth in mid-November. A British doctor sent on board found the survivors suffering "from want of the Necessaries of Life." The *Ruby* was blown off course and ran aground in the Azores; only 120 of the 310 Acadians on board were rescued. Another 550 succumbed to disease at sea or after their ships reached St. Malo, France, in January 1759.

The *Violet* was about 300 miles off the coast of England when it sank. The terrified men and women on the *Duke William* formed human chains and bailed the hold with washtubs for an entire day. Lookouts twice spotted passing ships, but the *Duke William*'s distress signals and cannon shots were ignored. By the morning of December 13, with the ship lying deep in the water, the exhausted Acadians realized they could not save the ship or themselves. Abbé Jacques Girard, who was accompanying his parishoners on the voyage, held a brief ceremony to grant absolution to his doomed flock, even though the decks might blow at any moment from the pressure of the water rushing into the hold. "A melancholy scene ensued," a Victorian-era writer recounted, with "strong, hearty, and healthy men, looking at each other, with tears in their eyes, bewailing their unhappy condition, and preparing for death."

There was no escape — at least for the passengers. The *Duke William* carried two small boats and, according to another account of the sinking, the Acadians "with one consent, agreed to the master, crew, and priest taking the boats, and themselves to perish with the ship." It's more likely that Captain Nichols and his crew decided to save their own skins. One Acadian man who tried to join them in the boats was shamed into staying aboard when his wife cried out: "Will you thus leave your wife and children to perish without you?" Abbé Girard later claimed he saved himself so he could "save the souls of other heretics (meaning the English) and bring them to God along with him." The captain, crew, and priest made landfall near Penzance, England. "We have saved nothing," Girard reported to his superiors upon reaching France



MONTAGE: MICHEL GROLEAU

LEWIS PARKER

At left, Marquis de Vaudreuil, governor of Quebec during the Acadian expulsion.

in January 1759, "other than our body very badly clothed." Four Acadian men managed to launch a dinghy and swam to it as the ship sank; they, too, reached the English coast. As the *Duke William* went down, they reported, its deck shattered with a roar "like the explosion of a gun, or a loud clap of thunder."

An estimated 1,700 Acadians died during the deportation from Île Saint-Jean. They were the victims of poor planning and of British commanders so callous they thought nothing of tossing destitute people to the mercy of the North Atlantic during the stormiest season of the year. The survivors arrived in France, only to face more ordeals. "These wretched people," Commandant Villejouin predicted, "will be without food and clothing, unable to procure lodgings and firewood, in a strange world, timid by nature, and knowing not whither to turn in their hour of need." The French government launched several botched schemes to resettle the Acadians within France, or recruited them to colonize Guiana and other far-flung possessions.

A few hundred Acadians remained on P.E.I., and more returned after the Seven Years War ended in 1763. Their settlements were clustered at the western end of the island, and for more than a century they lived apart from their English-speaking neighbours.

By 1921, however, they numbered 12,000 — accounting for one-eighth of P.E.I.'s population — and Acadian politicians had served in the provincial legislature, the Senate and the premier's office. In the 2001 census, despite decades of assimilation, 5,600 Islanders still claimed French as their first language.

Today, grass-covered ramparts and ditches atop a hill near Port-la-Joye are all that remain of Fort Amherst, built by the British during the expulsion of 1758 and named for the general who mistakenly believed removing the Acadians from Île Saint-Jean would be "for the best."

Dean Jobb is an assistant professor of journalism at the University of King's College in Halifax and author of The Acadians: A People's Story of Exile and Triumph (John Wiley & Sons Canada, 2005).

Et Cetera

Deportation of the Prince Edward Island Acadians by Earle Lockerby. Nimbus Publishing, Halifax, 2008.

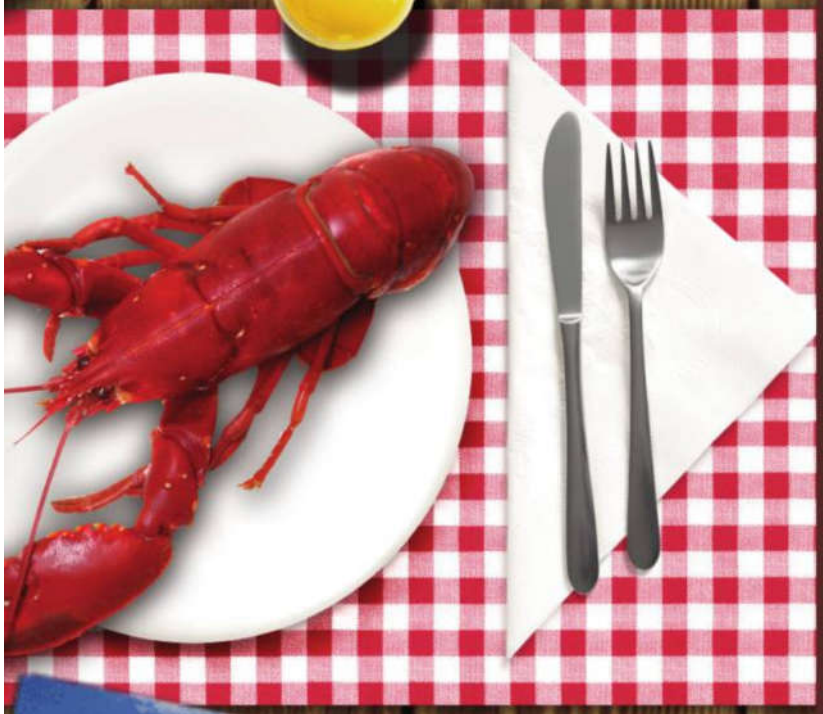
A History of Prince Edward Island by A.B. Warburton. Barnes and Co. Ltd., Printers, Saint John, N.B., 1923.

One of the paintings of the 1758 Acadian expulsion done by modern-day schoolchildren in P.E.I.

Writer Georges Arsenault traces his island ancestry to 1728 and has helped revive the folklore of Acadian P.E.I.

MONTAGE: MICHEL GIROUARD

The yellow Star of the Sea (Stella Maris) in the Acadian flag is a symbol of guidance to the Acadians during difficult times.



The blessing of the ships, an annual Acadian ritual on the island.

The Acadian Museum of P.E.I., located at Miscouche.

The Evangeline Region of P.E.I. is named for the Acadian heroine created by American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.

The forgotten Acadia

The word "Acadia" most often conjures up New Brunswick or Nova Scotia, with many Canadians unaware that Prince Edward Island also has a strong Acadian heritage. Statistics Canada estimates that about a quarter of P.E.I.'s population is of Acadian or French descent, yet with names like Perry, Deagle, Myers, and Peters, who would ever guess? These names — formerly Poirier, Daigle, Maillet, and Pitre — as well as many others, are derived from French.

"And since there has been much intercultural marriage for over a hundred years, many a MacDonald or McNeil or O'Brian are probably not aware that they have an Acadian grand- or great-grandmother," said Georges Arsenault. An island folklorist and historian, Arsenault's own line stretches back to a family who first came to the island in 1728 and settled along Malpeque Bay.

Arsenault's interest in his own heritage led him to do groundbreaking work in collecting the songs, stories, and folklore of Acadian P.E.I. In many cases he simply interviewed his neighbours and documented lyrics that date all the way back to the Acadians' beginnings in the 1600s.

He recalls how, in the 1970s, he interviewed an elderly woman named Maggie Chaisson, who lived in the mostly assimilated community of St. Edward, yet spoke only French. She knew many old songs — "old medieval ballads, hundreds of years old. It was such a revelation."

That Acadian P.E.I. culture was preserved and renewed over the years is remarkable, considering the Acadians here were nearly wiped out.

Various upheavals — crop failures, illness, famine, war, and deportation — plagued the struggling colonists over the years. Yet some managed to remain on the island, or to return to it, and a number of francophone communities clung to their language, religion, and culture in spite of British domination.

As far back as the 1860s, there was a period of Acadian renewal. A watershed moment came in 1884 at a convention in Miscouche, P.E.I., when a national Acadian flag and anthem were selected.

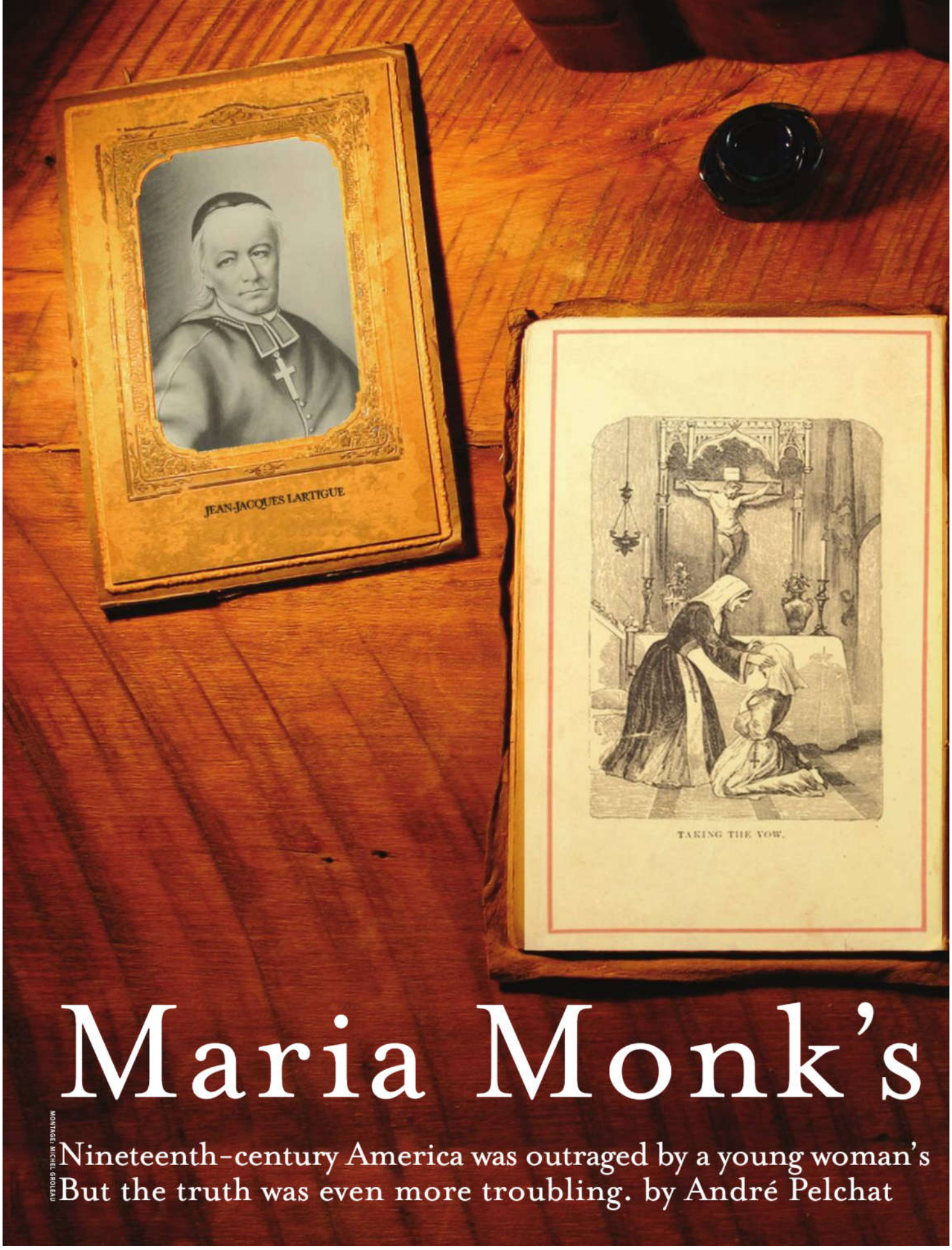
The red, white, and blue Acadian flag, which is actually the flag of France, except with a Stella Maris (Star of the Sea) in the corner, today flies proudly at schools and other institutions.

The official anthem — the Latin hymn *Ave Maris Stella*, reflecting the Acadians' traditional devotion to the Virgin Mary — is still sung, with French words adopted in 1994.

Interest in keeping Acadian identity alive on P.E.I. remains vigorous. Numerous events this past year commemorated the 250th anniversary of the deportation. For instance, Lieutenant Governor Barbara Hagerman invited schoolchildren to submit artwork of the deportation for a contest. The ten winners were displayed at Government House (to see the winning paintings, go to: TheBeaver.ca).

Meanwhile, folk music traditions kept alive over the centuries by people like Maggie Chaisson have seen a resurgence in recent years, as young Acadian musicians bring old tunes to a new audience.

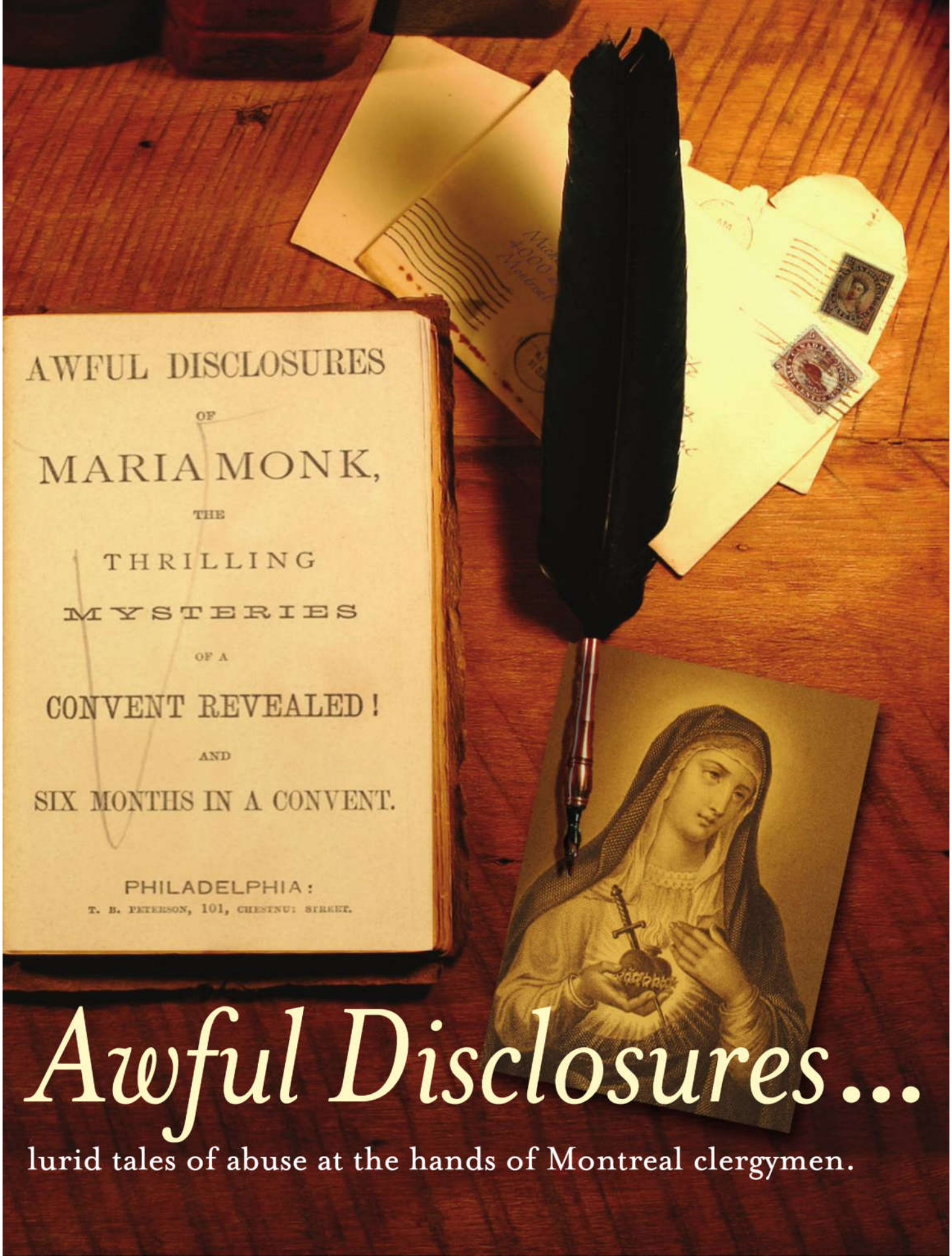
— Nelle Oosterom



Maria Monk's

MONTAGE: MICHEL GROLEAU

Nineteenth-century America was outraged by a young woman's
But the truth was even more troubling. by André Pelchat



Awful Disclosures...

lurid tales of abuse at the hands of Montreal clergymen.

On September 8, 1849, a popular Catholic newspaper in Massachusetts, *The Boston Pilot*, ran the following obituary: "There is an end of Maria Monk; she died in the almshouse, Blackwell's Island, New York, on Tuesday."

Why would a newspaper gloat on the death of a poor woman in an almshouse? Only because this poor woman happened to be at the centre of a sex abuse scandal that had rocked a respectable Montreal convent to its core, whipping up anti-Catholic fervour across North America.

As the story went, Maria Monk was a nun who became pregnant by a priest. She fled the convent so that her child would not be killed, and ended up at a Protestant charity hospital in New York. There, a minister convinced her to tell her tale to the press.

The result was the publication in 1836 of a small book with a very long title: *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk as Exhibited in a Narrative of Her Sufferings during a Residence of five Years as a Novice and Two Years as a Black Nun in the Hotel Dieu Nunnery at Montreal.* The book sold 20,000 copies within a few weeks and over 300,000 in the next few years, becoming the best-selling title in the United States until the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* in 1852.

In this 1836 engraving, Maria Monk recounts the horrors she allegedly witnessed at the Hotel Dieu nunnery in Montreal.

The description of her admission as a nun set the tone for the whole book: "One of my great duties was to obey the priests in all things; and this I soon learnt, to my utter astonishment and horror, was to live in the practice of criminal intercourse with them."

Monk claimed the convent functioned as a harem for Montreal's Catholic priests. It was also said to be a place of crime and torture, with secret entrances, tunnels, prisons, and a mass grave where infants born from the unholy unions between priests and nuns were systematically thrown after being baptized and then murdered.

The author wrote of "secret places of internment.... Hear the shrieks of helpless females in the hands of atrocious men," girls "crushed to death," "maimed," "garrotted," and "gagged."

"I have seen half a dozen lying gagged and bound at once."

The tales of Maria Monk were as much pornography as anything. And the public lapped it up.

The only problem with Monk's outrageous stories was that they were blatantly untrue. The whole thing was a lie, fired up by the nativist movement, an anti-Catholic, anti-foreign political force that was especially strong in the U.S. at this time. What's more, she didn't even write it. It was penned by a group of men looking to make a tidy profit.

This was not the first such anti-Catholic work to be published in the United States at the time, nor would it be the last. In 1834, a book called *Six Months in a Convent* had "disclosed" similar stories about an Ursuline convent in Charlestown, South Carolina. It led to the burning down of that convent by an angry mob, an ugly incident that led many moderate Protestants to distance themselves from the nativist movement.

Awful Disclosures sold many more copies than *Six Months in a Convent*, and its success inspired a wave of "convent exposés" that fuelled an already strong anti-Catholic feeling in the United States. With Irish Catholics arriving in North America in great numbers, the Protestant majority was worried about a papal takeover. *The Protestant Vindicator*, a nativist American newspaper, exploited this sentiment as it beat the drum for *Awful Disclosures*.

Needless to say, Montreal's citizens were outraged, for they had great respect for the Hotel Dieu. Jeanne Mance had founded the venerable institution in 1659 and the sisters had enhanced their good name for their tireless work in tending to the sick

during the cholera epidemics of the 1830s.

Two Montrealers, John Jones and Pierre-Édouard Leclère, proprietors and editors of *L'Ami du peuple*, went so far as to publish a rebuttal of the book. It was called *Awful exposure of the atrocious plot formed by certain individuals against the clergy and nuns of lower Canada, through the intervention of Maria Monk.*

Unfortunately, it was all but ignored: "Well-reasoned and full of verifiable facts, the book was little read. It was denounced as a fabrication put out by the priests of Montreal," wrote Ruth Hughes, an American rare book librarian who presented a paper on Maria Monk in 1997. Her paper was based on her research of archival material at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Philadelphia and is often cited.

As for the much-respected sisters of the Hotel Dieu, they did not stoop to answer the accusations found in *Awful Disclosures*. Bishop Lartigue of Montreal also opted to stay out of the fight. In a letter he wrote discouraging someone from writing a refutation, Lartigue said it "would accord too much importance to such a wretched and absurd story...."

The book continued to sell briskly and was reprinted well into the nineteenth century and beyond. In fact, the most recent paperback edition came out in 1997. "Quite an industry was born out of Maria Monk's story," wrote Hughes, who is now chief cataloguer with the Library Company of Philadelphia.

Quite an industry came out of efforts to get to the truth of it, as well.

In 1836, a well-known American journalist who was sympathetic to the nativists came to Montreal to see for himself what the Hotel Dieu was like. Colonel William Leete Stone, a New York newspaper editor, obtained special permission from Bishop Lartigue to go inside the convent (usually forbidden to men) with a team of fellow Protestants. During two trips, he found no trace of the tunnels, prisons, and mass graves mentioned in Maria Monk's firebrand. What is more, he met both Maria Monk and Frances Partridge — another woman who claimed to have escaped from the convent — and questioned them. From this inquiry, he drew the conclusion that neither of them "had ever set foot in the convent of the Hotel Dieu." Others who examined Maria Monk's book couldn't help but notice how similar it was to a popular literary genre of the time — the Gothic novel. For instance, *Awful Disclosures* includes a mentally disturbed nun as a comic character, an obvious rip-off from Ann Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, one of the most popular Gothic novels. The mention Maria Monk made of "Indian superstitions" in the convent also revived the old tales of Indian captivity that were a staple of American literature since colonial days.

Maria Monk flees the Hotel Dieu in this 1836 engraving.

But the most damning evidence of fraud came when a series of lawsuits and countersuits exploded in New York's courts shortly after the book was published in 1836. It involved Maria Monk and a certain Rev. J .J. Slocum against a group of people that included Theodore Dwight, a Rev. Georges Bourne, a William K. Hoyte of the Canadian Benevolent Society, and others who turned out to be the real authors of *Awful Disclosures*. The suits involved the sharing of the massive profits produced by the publication of the book. The trials that followed revealed a great deal of information concerning Maria Monk. And much of it was just as strange and scandalous as the fictional account.

Monk was born in 1816 or 1817 in Dorchester, Lower Canada (now St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec), into a Protestant family. In an affidavit given in court in Montreal in 1835, her mother described her as "an uncontrollable child," subject to "wild

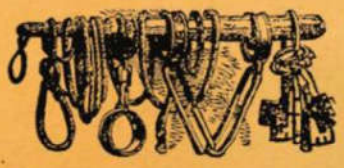
fantasies." It seems that an accident she had when still a child, in which a pencil was rammed into her ear, might have caused brain damage. At any rate, she got involved in prostitution at an early age and, in 1834, her mother had her confined to the Charitable Institution for Female Penitents, also known as the Magdalene Asylum of Montreal. This workhouse for "fallen women" was run by nuns and was as close as she would get to a Catholic institution.

At eighteen, she was expelled from the place when found pregnant. She then went to the Canadian Benevolent Society, a Protestant association combining missionary work and anti-Catholic militancy. The place was led by Rev. William K. Hoyte, who soon became Maria Monk's lover. Together they travelled to New York, where Hoyte introduced Maria to a group of fellow nativists. Collectively, those people wrote *Awful Disclosures*. It became clear in the New York court that Slocum, Hoyte, and Bourne were the major authors of the book. Maria subsequently left Hoyte to become Slocum's mistress, and together they sued the others. The judge turned all of them out of court and told them to go before a jury. None of them ever dared to do so. The final outcome of the legal proceedings remains unclear.

Then, in 1837, Monk suddenly went to Philadelphia with an unidentified male companion. She disappeared, only to resurface in the home of a physician, pretending to have been abducted by priests. When the next year she gave birth to a fatherless child, her last supporters left her and she drifted out of the public's eye. What happened to her afterward is uncertain, until 1849, when she was arrested for picking the pockets of yet another boyfriend, shortly before her death.

Her *Awful Disclosures*, meanwhile, took on a life on its own — so much so that in 1855 the Massachusetts legislature created a committee to investigate the nunneries in the state, but found no evidence to support the lurid stories. Convent exposés continued to be a staple of American hate literature. In the 1890s, for instance, a nativist group called the American Protective Association published many "convent horrors" in their magazine.

Today, as is the way of things in the age of the Internet, Maria Monk's "disclosures" seem destined to live forever on the Web. Her entire story can be read online, and various websites still debate the veracity of her claims.



Maria Monk's Awful Disclosures ... soon took on a life of its own. And in this Internet age, her story seems destined to live forever on the Web.

To read the complete text of *The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk...* go to: TheBeaver.ca.

Et Cetera

The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk... by Maria Monk. Various publishers, first published in 1836.

The Party of Fear: The American Far Right from Nativism to the Militia Movement by David H. Bennett. Vintage Books, New York, 1995.

Web: "The Awful Disclosures of Maria Monk" by Ruth Hughes, 1997 sas.upenn.edu/~traister/hughes.html

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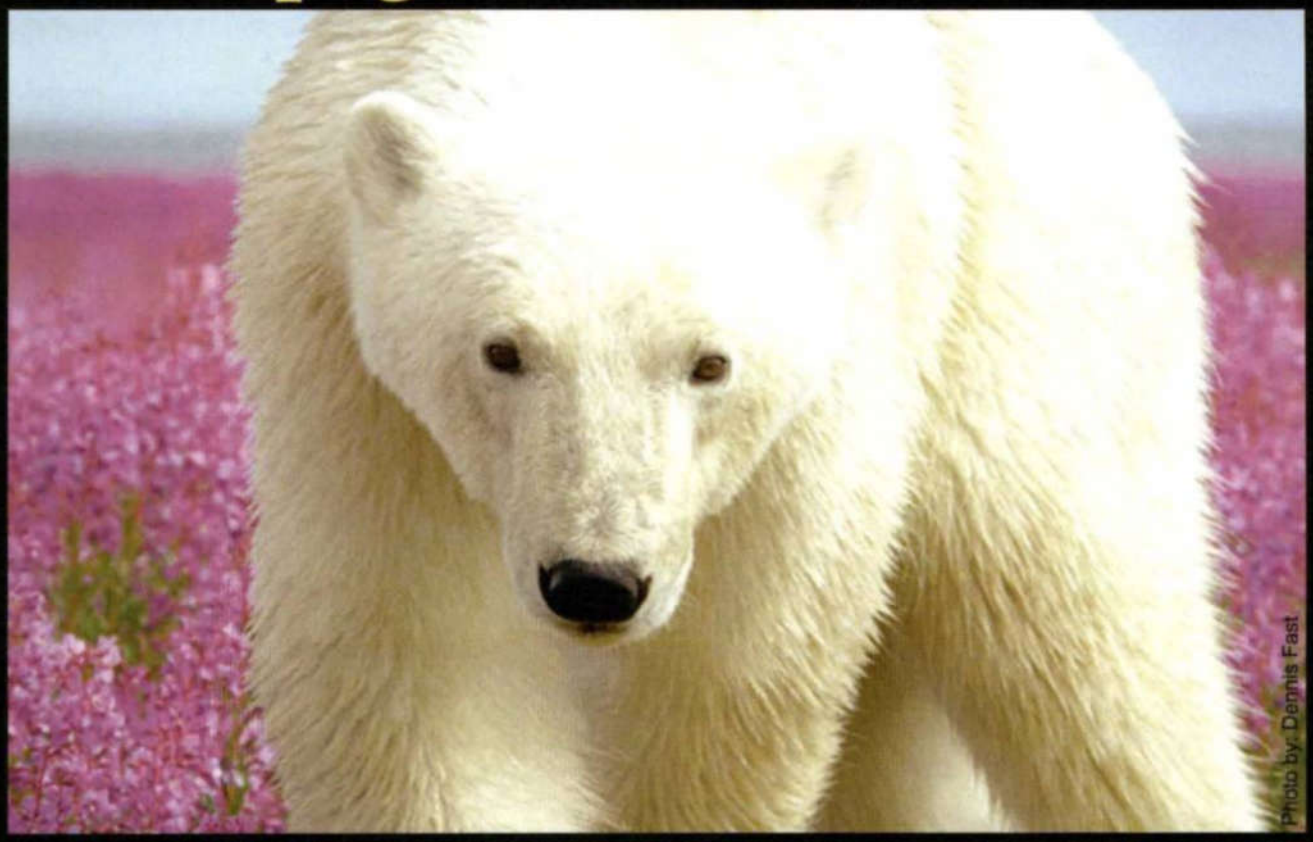

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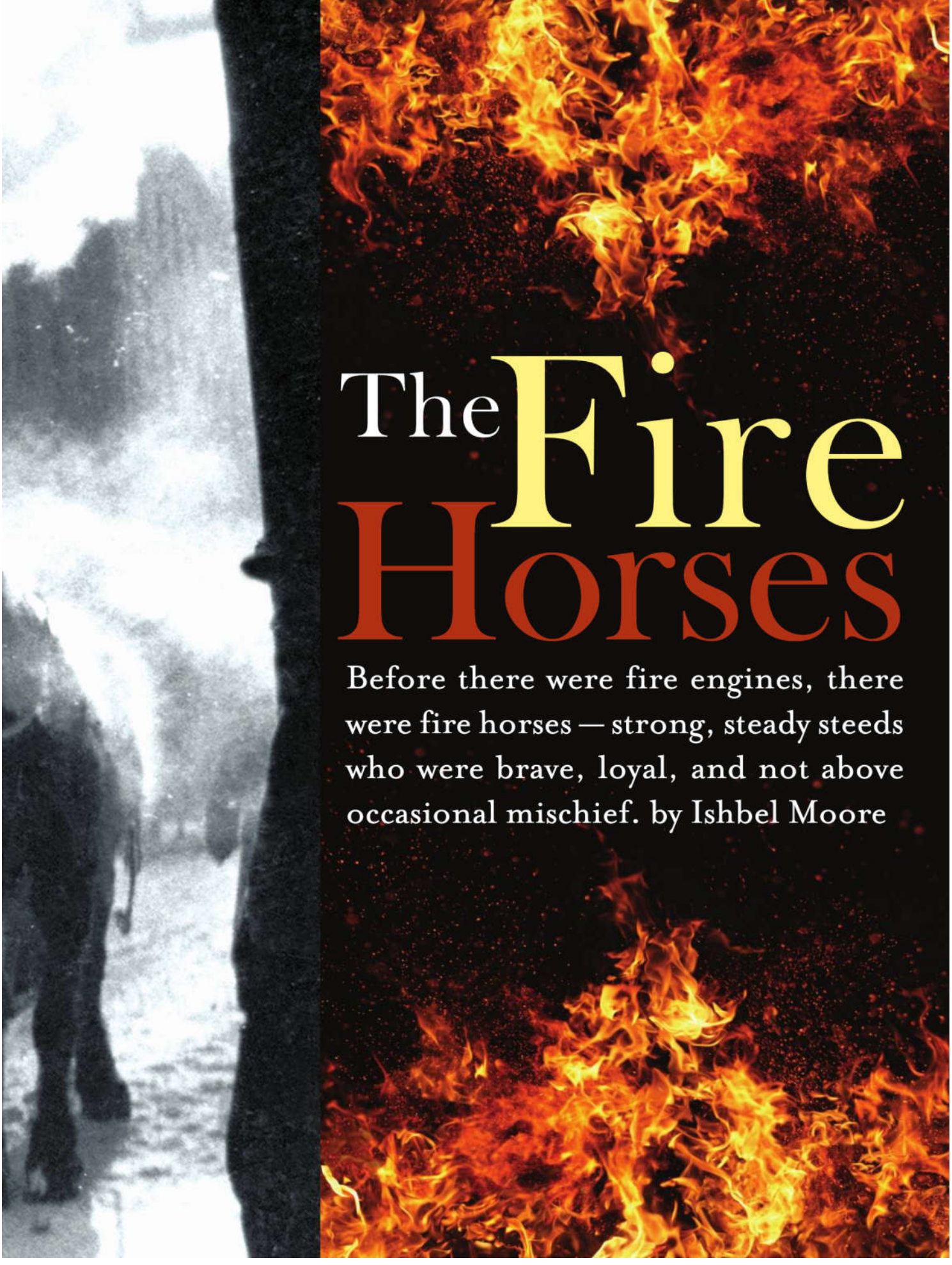
CA

CalmAir

Fire horses in Montreal stand their ground despite the chaos of smoke and fire surrounding them. Circa early 1900s.

B.B. PINKERTON/LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/PA-134830

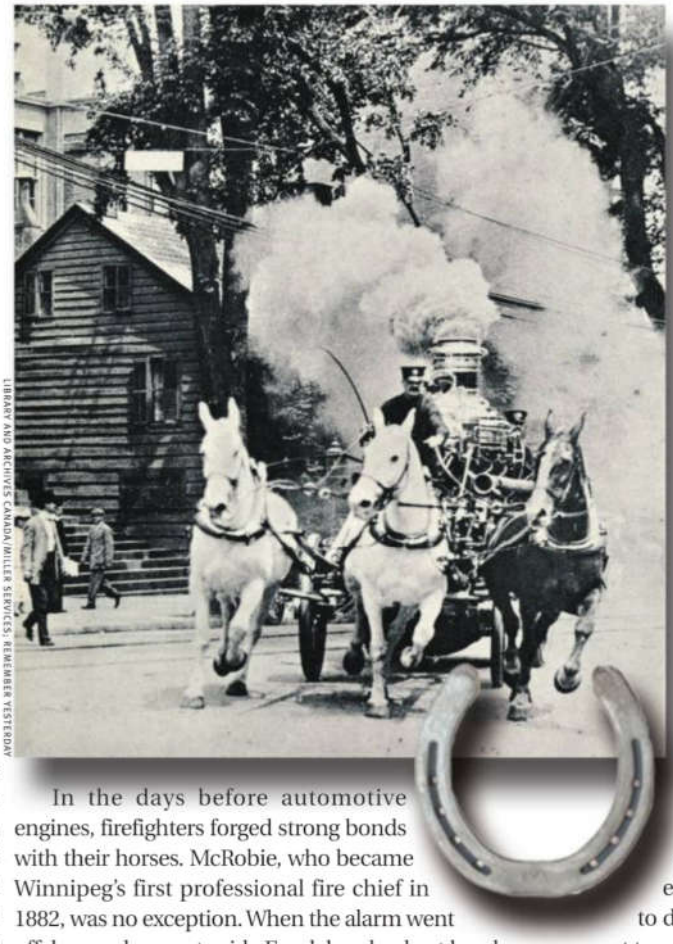


The Fire Horses

Before there were fire engines, there were fire horses — strong, steady steeds who were brave, loyal, and not above occasional mischief. by Ishbel Moore

Guests of the Manitoba Hotel pressed back as a soot-covered madman led Frank — a frothing, smoke-stained horse with a yapping dog at his heels — through the foyer and up to the bar. The guests stared in amazement as the man ordered a whisky for himself and a beer for his horse. When the strange and smelly entourage finally left, the onlookers sighed with relief.

The madman was none other than Chief William McRobie of the newly reformed Winnipeg Fire Department, enjoying his customary after-fire refreshment. It is not known if Frank the horse slurped his beer straight off the bar or drank it out of a bucket. But it is known that one New Year's Day, when McRobie left him untied at the side of the road to attend a house party, Frank trotted off, apparently headed to the city for his "little nip."



LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA/MILLER SERVICES; REMEMBER YESTERDAY

From the mid-1800s to the 1930s, fire horses were a common sight in most cities in Canada.

In the days before automotive engines, firefighters forged strong bonds with their horses. McRobie, who became Winnipeg's first professional fire chief in 1882, was no exception. When the alarm went off, he was known to ride Frank bareback, at breakneck speed, while blowing his bugle to warn people to get out of the way.

Fire horses were a common sight in most Canadian cities from about the mid-1800s to as late as the 1930s. They were usually kept in stables at the rear of the fire hall. When the alarm went off, the well-trained horses would move to their places in front of the rigs. Harnesses suspended from the ceiling were lowered and attached, allowing for a fast exit.

The magnificent horses — some weighing close to 700 kilograms — ran through the streets pulling steam-powered pumpers. Stories of their loyalty, bravery, and intelligence lived long after they were replaced with motor engines.

Grey Dick was one such horse of legend.

Grey Dick was purchased by the Winnipeg Fire Department on April 5, 1886, when he was five years old. A relative lightweight of less than 500 kilograms, Dick was not big enough to pull any of the wagons with his much larger stablemates. But he gained fame as the faithful buggy horse for three successive fire chiefs.

After ten years on the job, Grey Dick was dispatched to a downtown fire on a muggy night in 1896. He was tied in front of a building that was enveloped in heavy smoke. After a sympathetic onlooker set him free, Dick panicked and disappeared into the night. In the mad dash that followed, he fell into a freshly dug sewer hole in front of city hall and badly tore his tendon. It appeared Dick's days were numbered.

When a search party found him, no effort was spared to save his life. Firefighters scrambled into the hole and fitted bellybands around his body. Workers then placed a derrick over the hole and hoisted the animal out. He was rushed to the veterinary hospital, where he was suspended in the air as vets worked on his leg. Fortunately, just enough tendon remained to start the healing process. After six months, Grey Dick was fit enough to return to duty. He attended fires for another ten years.

Fredericton, New Brunswick, which was the last Canadian city to retire its fire horses in 1938, made much of its favourite, Old Bill. A 1938 obituary in the *Daily Mail* described him as a "snow-white smoke-eater " who was the "last fire horse of the Dominon." For many years his hoofprints were on display in a new section of cement sidewalk in front of the city's downtown fire station.

The roadways of early twentieth-century cities were not kind to horses. They hauled at full speed over mud, rutted clay, ice, and heavy snow. Rubber boots and hoof chains where tried with minimal success.

Fire hall records also tell of ailments such as front leg bone splints, cuts and gashes, sprains, colds, declining body condition, disease, and emotional difficulties. Any horse unable to return to duty was usually sold, taken to auction, or turned out to pasture.

The horses were generally well cared for. Stalls were mucked out every day. The horses were served the best hay and oats, and grooomed and walked daily.

Sometimes, though, men had to bunk in uncomfortably close proximity to the animals. A constable in St. John's, Newfoundland, complained in the early 1930s of having to sleep above the fire hall stable: "We slept there with the stink of that. We didn't have cots, we

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Horses pull a steam pumper through Victoria, B.C., during a May Day parade in 1910.

Winnipeg's 1936 winter dumped a huge amount of snow. The new automotive trucks were left spinning their wheels until someone remembered the horses.

had bunks built up on the side of the wall. The hay was stored in another part of it there, and the fleas would get in the hay. There was fleas, and you name it. It was never as bad as that out to the seal fishery in my time," said the constable, who was quoted in a report by the Heritage Foundation of Newfoundland and Labrador.

But all was not hard work and danger. There were many days of quiet leisure. Sparkling red firewagons and bathed and brushed horses took part in parades.

Horses lent a certain romance to firefighting, but their glory days ended with the coming of the motorized pumper. An April 1928 Winnipeg newspaper article lamented the end of an era: "Four of Winnipeg's fast-disappearing equine firefighters — crowded out of their once enviable jobs by the high-pressure competition of the motor truck...Horses will soon disappear altogether from the city's fire department."

By the early 1930s, horses were phased out in most cities. The retired horses were sold or given away. Some went to farms, others went to work pulling milk wagons or bread carts. Old habits died hard, though. In Saskatoon, there were reports of former fire horses jumping into action after hearing a fire alarm, with milk bottles bouncing around inside the wagon they were pulling and no driver on board.

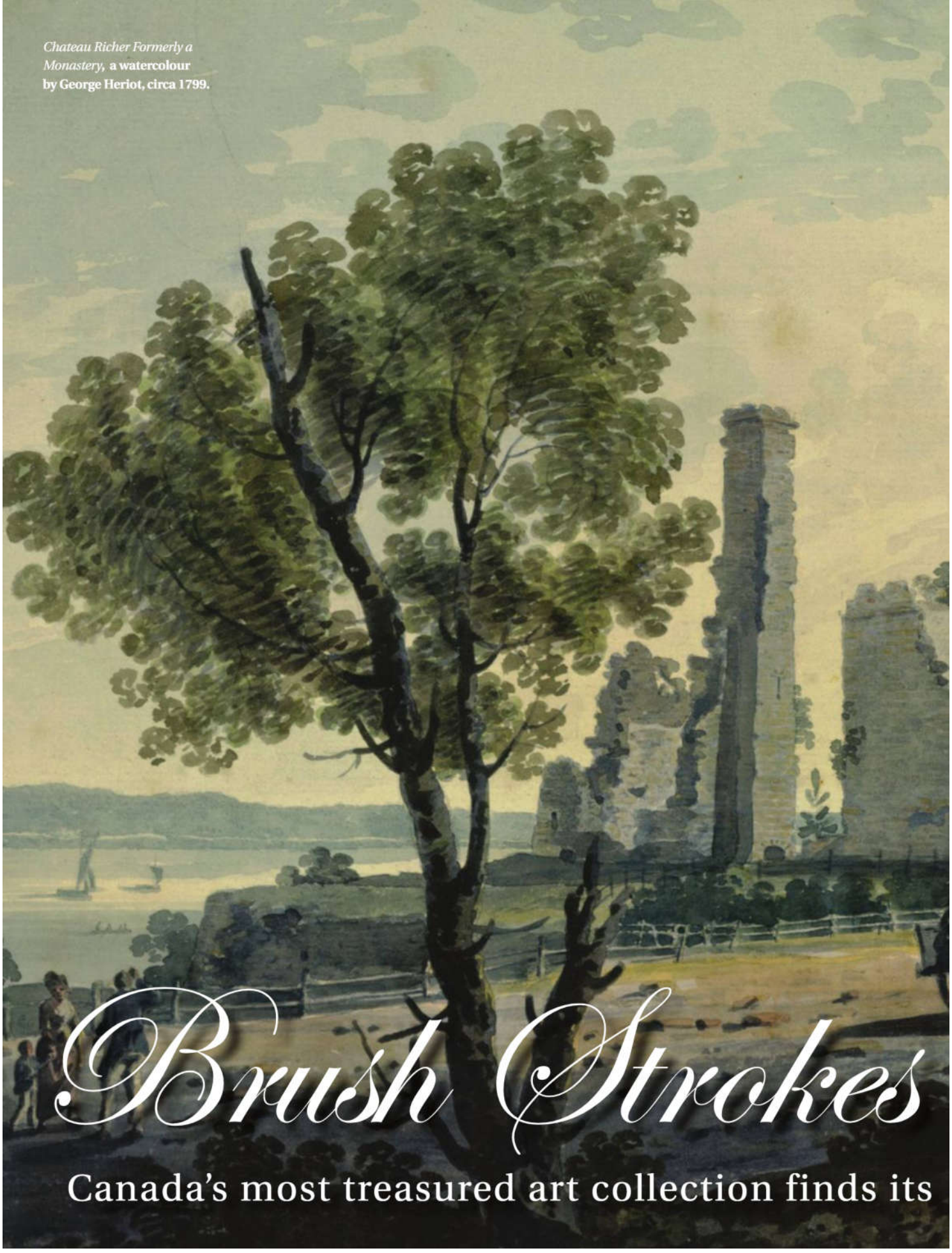
And as though to provide one last hurrah, Winnipeg's 1936 winter dumped a huge amount of snow. The new automotive trucks were left spinning their wheels until someone remembered the horses.

A few old faithfuls were brought out of retirement and, in one final glorious moment, proudly pulled the vehicles through otherwise impassable streets.

Ishbel Moore is a Winnipeg writer who has published thirteen novels, ten of them for children. This story was the winner in a contest run by the Manitoba Magazine Publishers Association. Moore dedicates this story to the courageous firefighters and brave horses of a bygone era who gave their all in the line of duty.

Et Cetera

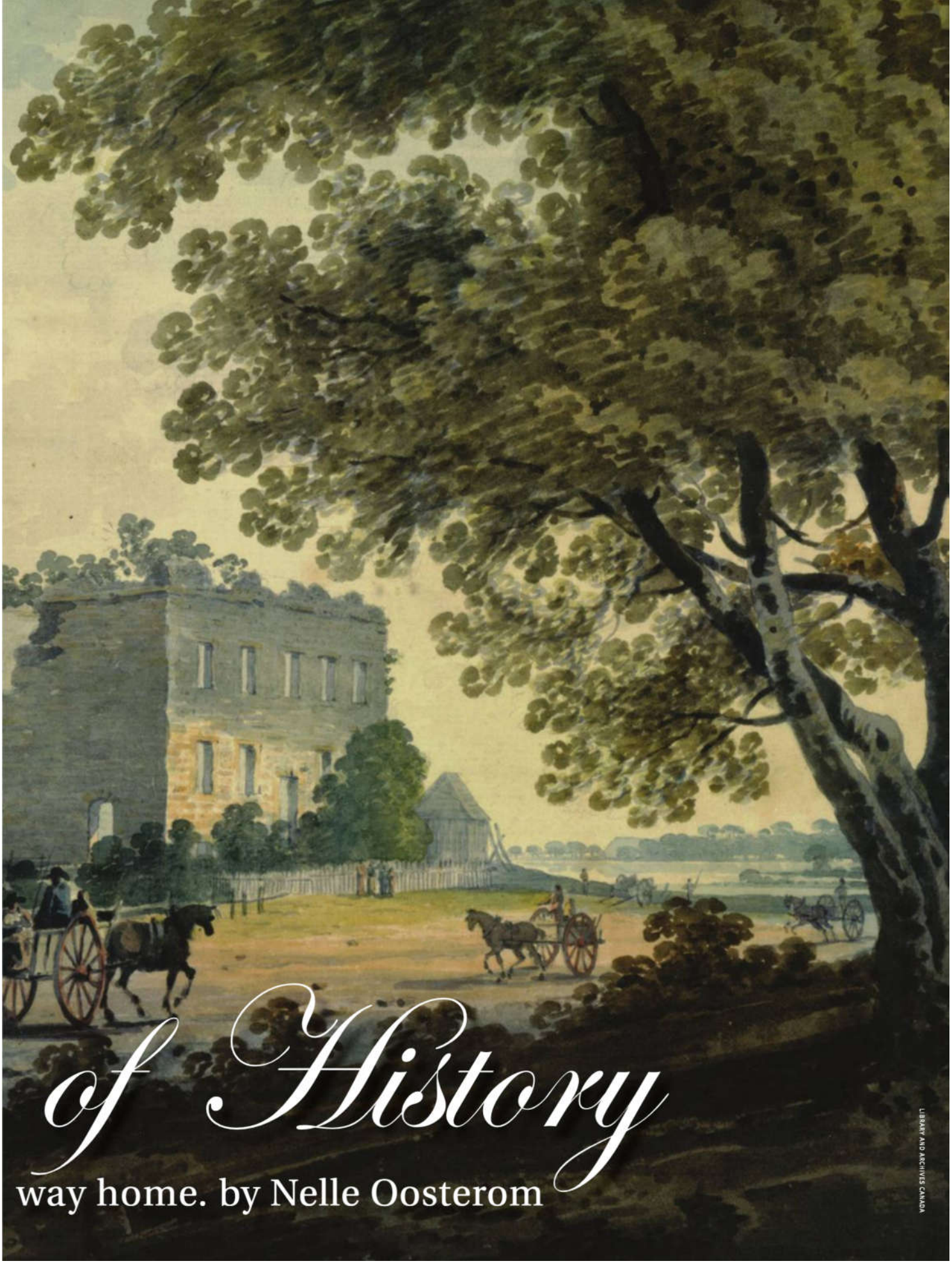
On the Web: winnipegfiremuseum.ca; firemuseumcanada.com.



Chateau Richer Formerly a Monastery, **a watercolour by George Heriot, circa 1799.**

Brush Strokes

Canada's most treasured art collection finds its


of History
way home. by Nelle Oosterom
LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

Winkworth's long journey home

When the art collection known as Winkworth II landed in Canada recently, the art history world hummed with anticipation. Not since the coming of Winkworth I back in 2002 has there been so much buzz about a private collection of Canadian art.

The second Winkworth collection includes works the private collector's family either didn't want to part with right away or didn't know existed.

"Even though we had an inventory done, there was much more material," explains Jim Burant, the chief of art and photo archives at Library and Archives Canada. "Like many collectors, Peter Winkworth didn't know everything he had."

Peter Winkworth, a Quebec-born art collector who lived most of his life in London, England, spent decades collecting Canadian art. In fact, he crammed his home so tightly with Canadiana that the walls were completely covered. Other material was stuffed under couches or piled on top of tables. Included in the piles were works by Cornelius Krieghoff, Peter Rindisbacher, and Maria Morris. Winkworth rarely showed any of it to anyone.

Burant, who became acquainted with Winkworth through his work at the archives, was one of the few who did see it, during a 1996 visit.

"It was one of those wonderful days, when you say that this is an experience never to be forgotten," recalls Burant.

Winkworth obtained much of his collection from the attics of people whose ancestors had made or had commissioned art while posted in Canada on military duty.

At the end of his 1996 visit, Burant popped the question to Winkworth that ultimately enriched Canada's art legacy forever: "What are you going to do with the collection when you die?"

It turned out that there was no plan. But by the time Winkworth died in 2005, years of negotiations spearheaded by Ian Wilson, now the librarian and archivist of Canada, had already taken place. A sale price of about $6 million closed the deal.

The more recent Winkworth acquisition, acquired for an undisclosed amount, includes thirteen oil paintings, twenty-six watercolours, four watercolour albums, 150 prints, nineteen print albums, several map publications, two nineteenth-century photo albums, and a number of other works. It's been divided between the National Gallery of Canada, the Canadian Museum of Civilization, and Library and Archives Canada. It will be digitized and placed on the Internet, and Library and Archives plans an exhibition of Winkworth II in the summer of 2009.

"It's been a long journey," Burant says of the efforts to get Winkworth's collection to Canada. "And I don't think it's complete yet. The Winkworth family still has a lot of art on the walls. At some point in the future there may yet be further acquisitions."

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

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NATIONAL GALLERY OF CANADA

At top, *nr. Musquedoboit, N.S.*, circa 1855–1857, by James Fox Bland. Bland was a British military officer posted in Halifax from 1853 to 1857, with service in the Crimea, 1854–1855.

Bottom left, *Market Scene, Bonsecours Market, Montreal*, circa 1847–1850, by James Duncan. Duncan was a professional artist who emigrated to Lower Canada from Ireland in 1825.

Bottom right, *View of the Ruins of the Gardens of the Recollets*, by George Heriot, circa 1799. Heriot was a British civil servant who served as Deputy Postmaster General of British North America from 1799 until circa 1816.

Canada's Audubon of wildflowers

This wildflower watercolour from Winkworth II was created by Maria Morris Miller (1813–1875), one of Canada's first recognized female artists. It is from her album *Wildflowers of Nova Scotia*. For some, her style evokes comparisons to American wildlife artist John James Audubon.

The daughter of a Nova Scotia merchant, Miller attended an art school in Halifax and went on to run her own drawing school for women. At a time when most professional artists were male, she was toasted as "Painter of the Year" for 1836 by the North British Society, a Halifax-based Scottish heritage group. *Wildflowers of British North America* was published in 1867, and her work was shown at the International Exposition in Paris that same year.

LIBRARY AND ARCHIVES CANADA

***Pipestem Dance*, by P. Grant, date unknown.**

Avoiding the trap of prejudice

This lively watercolour, part of the Winkworth II collection, has excited Canadian art historians. Painted by an artist who was virtually unknown, it is considered a rare find and could broaden our knowledge of indigenous people in the early nineteenth century.

Entitled *Pipestem Dance*, the painting is one of several aboriginal-themed pieces in the Winkworth II collection that stand out in part because the faces of the natives are fairly realistic-looking.

"The Europeans who were here and did this kind of work in that period very often made indigenous people look very strange, and often a little bit grotesque," says Ruth Phillips, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Modern Culture at Carleton University.

"Sometimes it was because they were amateur artists and just weren't very good at drawing faces or the body. Sometimes I think it was because they were seeing indigenous people through a prejudicial lens, a set of images they had in their heads. This [artist] seems to have avoided that trap."

Phillips says the people in the paintings are almost certainly from the eastern Great Lakes region, probably the north shore of Lake Ontario. And they are likely Anishinabe — a group that included the Ojibwa, Odawa, and Potawatomi nations — judging from the thunderbird totems depicted on the dancer's sash. "Those kinds of details [the thunderbirds] are very rarely visible in paintings, but they are very clear here," says Phillips, who hopes to have the painting examined by aboriginal elders.

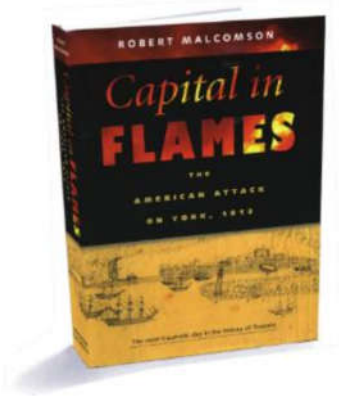
As for the artist, little was known beyond the name "P. Grant." However, curator Jim Burant of Library and Archives Canada has determined that Grant was probably a military officer. Nineteenth-century military officers were frequently schooled in drawing and painting and they sent their images home to family and friends.

Running the name through British army lists, Burant came up with two possibilities — Peter or Patrick Grant. Both were lieutenants promoted to captains in 1815 in the 1st Regiment of Foot (Royal Scots). "The style of work fits with these dates of service," says Burant.

Whether he was Peter or Patrick may never be known, but the talented artist's work has now become a key element of Canada's artistic legacy. — N.O.

To learn more about the Winkworth II art collection, go to: TheBeaver.ca

Reviews



HOT TIMES IN TORONTO

Capital in Flames:
The American Attack on York, 1813
by Robert Malcomson
Robin Brass Studio, Montreal, 2008
512 pp., illus., $39.95 hardcover

In just over three years, Canadians and Americans will begin to observe — perhaps celebrate — the bicentennial of the last military conflict between our countries. While the war from 1812 to 1814 was formally between Britain and the U.S., its main battles were fought on Canadian soil and in Canadian waters. In fact, many "war hawks" in Washington wished to annex all or part of British North America.

As with anniversaries of other significant events, we can expect a flow of new books on this conflict and its participants, supplemented by magazine articles, perhaps a television series, and certainly a museum exhibition. These will help increase awareness both in Canada and the U.S. — where the conflict has been called "America's Forgotten War."

The first book in this new wave has just appeared, and it offers a high standard for scholars and general readers. *Capital in Flames* is by Robert Malcomson, an eminent expert on the War of 1812 and an educator by profession. Malcomson has written several articles for *The Beaver*, but the focus of his past work has been specialist monographs.

The subject of his latest book is the attack on and occupation of York — the new, small capital of the Province of Upper Canada. While the battle was of small importance militarily, it gained great significance in shaping political mythology, militia policy, and social relations in Upper Canada.

On April 27, 1813, a force of 1,800 Americans landed on the western edge of York, close to today's Toronto CNE grounds. After brief skirmishes along the shore of Lake Ontario and in nearby woods, the invaders took control. Their well-coordinated amphibious attack was delayed by one last-ditch defensive action when York's main military magazine was deliberately destroyed. The huge explosion killed or injured several defenders and many Americans, including General Zebulon Pike (known today for the mountain peak in Colorado that bears his name).

Meanwhile, the defeated British forces, poorly led by Major General Sir Roger Sheaffe, retreated from the field, while members of the York-area militia retired to their nearby farms and homes. There were few local heroes, although a well-spoken Scots Anglican minister, the Rev. John Strachan, and several ranking citizens did assert leadership and stability.

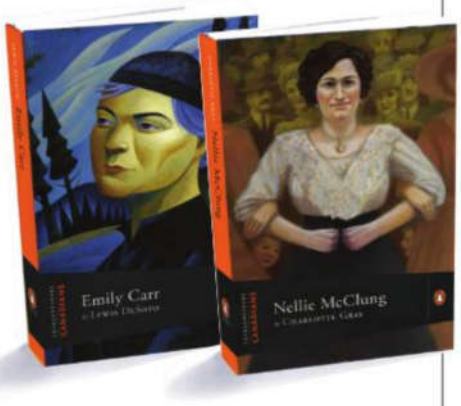
The attack did not achieve its main military goal, which was the capture of a large schooner under construction; the vessel was burnt by the retreating British. But the Americans did seize large quantities of food and military supplies. They also demonstrated their naval dominance on Lake Ontario as well as the vulnerability of Canadian settlements along the Niagara Peninsula and Lake Erie.

After six days, the Americans withdrew from little York, but their brief occupation left a malign legacy. Looting by soldiers and local hooligans reduced the holdings of food, valuables, and even books. The small legislative buildings of Upper Canada and nearby barracks were burned to the ground. This was a bitter prelude to many destructive actions on both sides of the border, culminating in the August 1814 burning of prominent Washington buildings, including the White House, by British soldiers.

Was this retribution for the destruction at York? Malcomson does not believe so. Perhaps it was because of the brutal burning of Newark (today's Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario) in December 1813? Or was it just one nasty incident in a conflict between close neighbours?

Capital in Flames places the attack on York in the wider context of transportation, land, and naval challenges. Robert Malcomson is aware of the risks of exaggerating this military event, so he has expanded the narrative to include a social picture of life, times, people, and place. He does not play at armchair admiral or general, second-guessing past decisions. Rather, Malcomson has written solid, accessible history. This is an excellent book for reading and keeping.

Reviewed by **Victor Rabinovitch**, the CEO of the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Canadian War Museum. He is a fellow of the Queen's School of Policy Studies.



WOMEN OF CHANGE

Extraordinary Canadians: Emily Carr
by Lewis DeSoto
Penguin Canada, Toronto, 2008
185 pp., $26 hardcover

Extraordinary Canadians: Nellie McClung
by Charlotte Gray
Penguin Canada, Toronto, 2008
204 pp., $26 hardcover

No sooner had I finished Lewis DeSoto's book than I wanted to run to the nearest exhibition of Emily Carr's paintings and look at them anew. And as I completed Charlotte Gray's book, I rushed to the computer to hear the

one "live" recording of Nellie McClung (online at CBC Digital Archives). The two women were calling to me.

Only after reading Extraordinary Canadians series general editor John Ralston Saul's introduction, which I had carefully left to the end so as not to be influenced by what he thought I should see, did I realize that that was exactly what was supposed to happen. Saul's "didactic and nationalist" purpose — the phrase is DeSoto's in reference to the National Gallery's exhibition of 1927, where Carr's paintings finally came to public attention — has been splendidly achieved.

So don't be put off by the charming simplicity of format and language of these books. There's a depth and passion to them that is compelling. Perhaps significantly, the authors are both "from away" and neither is an historian (painter/novelist DeSoto is from South Africa and writer Gray from Britain); their need to understand and portray their subjects is palpable.

In DeSoto's case, his need is even prefaced with a *mea culpa*: He didn't like Carr's paintings when he first encountered them. But the British Columbia forest taught him otherwise, and he now places her work on a par with that of Van Gogh, Munch, and Cézanne. His book is an unusual blend of biography, art history, criticism, and feminist sensitivity. The approach does lend itself to a bit of repetition, something which does not happen in Gray's more conventionally structured biography of McClung, but the result is a rich tapestry of Carr-revealing colours and threads.

In Gray's case, she needed to understand the feminism she encountered in Canadians in the early 1980s. We are all, it would seem, inheritors of one or another of the characteristics that McClung combined in one person: determination, self-assurance, boundless energy, humour, organizational skills, public-speaking abilities, and an unshakable belief in equality and justice. She was also a best-selling author, wife, and mother of five.

With the exception of family, McClung and Carr had much in common. Only two years separated them in age; their lives covered the last third of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries, years of change — to which they both contributed — that was far more profound than that of our "information age."

Both women were westerners, rooted in a Prairie or Pacific landscape and rebellious against social norms. Each displayed an early ambition, Nellie to be a writer and Emily as an artist. They each had a sense of humour: Nellie's catapulted her onto the public stage of political and social reform; Emily's sustained her more isolated and often discouraging path of artistic invention.

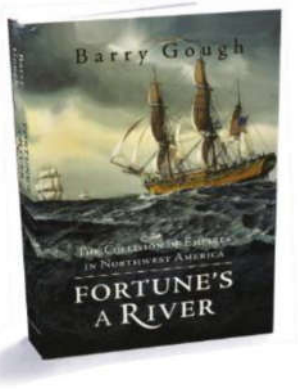
Through it all, each woman guarded her private life scrupulously; indeed, each made use of her considerable literary skills to fashion her own story for public consumption. Authors Gray and DeSoto are well aware of this, and they use their own literary skills to peek speculatively but convincingly behind McClung's and Carr's versions.

There's nothing speculative about the public lives of these women, however, nor about their contribution to the making of Canada. Here are two women, doggedly determined — and against all odds — to shape their environment as they see right. McClung knew what she wanted and she got most of it for us: votes for women; prohibition (for a while); legal reforms (women are persons!); the ordination of women; protections for and the welcoming of immigrants. Carr knew what she sought, and she eventually found it for herself and shaped it for us in glorious paintings. A country that can produce two such people isn't doing badly.

But there's more to come, another sixteen volumes in Penguin's Extraordinary Canadians series. If these two books are any indication, the series promises to be remarkable. However, it ought not to be forgotten that without the range and depth of historical scholarship about Canada that has flourished in merely the last forty years, such a series would not be possible.

That scholarship also permits a few quibbles with these two books: Saul's omission of any reference to the major biographical project of Canadian history — the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*; DeSoto's telescoping of context that takes some chronological liberties; Gray's making J.S. Woodsworth (never identified as a minister) the founder of the Social Gospel. That being said, and while awaiting the other extraordinary Canadians, we might ensure that these two books be read by every Canadian, old or new, female or male.

Reviewed by **Susan Mann**, a Montreal historian and the author of *Margaret Macdonald: Imperial Daughter.*



A LINE IN THE FOREST

Fortune's A River: The Collision of Empires In Northwest America
by Barry Gough
Harbour Publishing, Madeira Park, B.C., 2007
400 pp., illus., $36.95 hardcover

From the days when he was the founding director of Canadian Studies at Wilfrid Laurier University, Barry Gough developed a parallel career as a fine writer of the history of North America's northwest coast. In the process of writing ten well-received books

he became arguably Canada's finest maritime historian.

That scholarly and literary ability is much in evidence in his newest book, *Fortune's A River: The Collision of Empires In Northwest America*. A departure from Gough's usual concern with naval history, it deals instead with the largely overland rush to claim the magnificent northwest coast — now Oregon, Washington, British Columbia, and northern California — at the end of the eighteenth century.

Soon after the conclusion of the American Revolution in 1783, and with the results of James Cook's extraordinary Pacific voyages disseminated through the world's scholarly and political communities, the stage was set for a rush to occupy the most spectacular portion of North America that remained open to claim: the Pacific Northwest.

The Russians were established in Alaska and looking southward; the Spanish were exploring north from Mexico and still considered any lands fronting the Pacific to be theirs; Cook's arrival at Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island had provided a basis for a British claim; and enterprising American merchants from the former Thirteen Colonies were on the coast pursuing sea otter pelts and envisioning an American claim to the region.

With a combination of meticulous factual backup and an engaging writing style, Gough assembles a complex picture of these various players. Working towards the Oregon Crisis of 1846 and the border agreement that brought an end to the competition, *Fortune's A River* takes readers through the thrusts, misadventures, and successes that established who would eventually claim the region.

Gough shows how the pioneering explorations and voyages of David Thompson and Alexander Mackenzie inspired U.S. President Thomas Jefferson to send off the Lewis and Clark expedition, and how the energy and initiative of the men of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Northwest Company in pursuit of furs very nearly brought a far larger portion of northwest America into a future Canada.

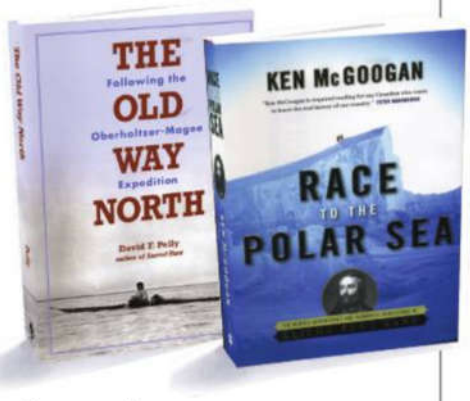
Gradually, American settlement pressure and the reluctance of Great Britain to seriously oppose Washington led to the retreat of the Hudson's Bay Company, the Americans claiming the Columbia River's mouth and flood plain, and the final process that would see British North America pushed north of Puget Sound.

Gough tells this story in lucid detail and allows readers to see with clarity the competition between, in the end, two cousinly empires regarding whose flags would fly over the evergreen coast. In doing so, he has added a cornerstone study to our understanding of Pacific Coast history. Gough's agreeably open and clear style has become his trademark.

That style is in evidence in the following passage, which neatly sums up Spain's policy toward western North America: "Spain cast a cloak of secrecy and silence over the vast, still-undefined area west of the Mississippi. … Just as they kept secret their charts and other hydrographical data from the British, their rivals at sea, so too did they lay a veil of mystery over the western interior of North America. On the perimeters and margins of a quarter of a continent they still did not know, they, figuratively speaking, posted signs that read 'No Trespassing.'"

Few writers of history today manage to combine evocative imagery and first-rate scholarship as well as Gough, and this alone is reason to add *Fortune's A River* to the bookshelves of students of North American Pacific history. Fortunately, Gough provides many more reasons in this fine work. Highly recommended.

Reviewed by **Victor Suthren**, a writer and historian with an interest in colonial-era seafaring and exploration. He is the former director general of the Canadian War Museum and currently divides his time between designing historical pageantry for Canada's navy and completing a major study of Canada's relationship with the sea, to be published in 2009.



GO WITH THE FLOE

Race to the Polar Sea: The Heroic Adventures and Romantic Obsessions of Elisha Kent Kane
by Ken McGoogan
HarperCollins, Toronto, 2008
365 pp., illus., $34.95 hardcover

The Old Way North: Following the Oberholtzer-Magee Expedition
by David F. Pelly
Borealis Books, St. Paul, Minnesota, 2008
197 pp., illus., $27.95 hardcover

"A scientist studying the effects of extreme stress could hardly do better than to confine nineteen men in a cabin and subject them to intense cold and never-ending darkness while attacking them with scurvy and starvation." This passage from *Race to the Polar Sea*, Ken McGoogan's fourth book of Arctic exploration, actually falls short of summing up the privations endured by explorer Elisha Kent Kane and his crew. It neglects to mention the rats: the four-footed ones that gnawed away at the ship, and the two-footed ones — treacherous crew members — who gnawed away at morale.

In this bone-chilling book — pun intended — McGoogan writes in detail of the unimaginable hardships of the 1853 to 1855 polar journey led by Kane, a largely neglected American explorer. *Race to the Polar Sea* is based in part on Kane's long-lost journal, which McGoogan hap-

Reviews

THEY NEVER SURRENDERED:

The Lakota Sioux Band That Stayed In Canada
by
Ron Papandrea

"The long-missing history of the Lakota Sioux who stayed in Canada after Sitting Bull yielded in 1881."

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National Park Service

"They chose the freedom of the Canadian prairies. Some continued to live a free-roaming life well into the 20th century."

Robert M. Utley
Chief Historian (ret.)
National Park Service

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pened to discover in the collection of a Calgary bookseller.

A Philadelphia doctor who led a private expedition in search of the lost Franklin expedition, Kane also sought to discover what many believed was an open polar sea teeming with fish and mammals.

He went further north than any explorer of his time, made groundbreaking observations about glaciers, and forged alliances with the Inuit that were remembered for many generations. While writers such as Pierre Berton have not been kind to Kane, McGoogan describes him as a humane, archetypal hero, driven to accomplish some great thing.

It's hard not to like the man McGoogan portrays — Kane battles recurring bouts of life-threatening illness, risks his life many times in high-minded adventures all over the world, charms American society with his eloquent public lectures, and obsesses over an ill-fated love affair with a celebrity psychic. But mostly, it is his heroic effort to lead his crew to safety after they become trapped in the ice — "the most extraordinary escape in Arctic history" — that suggests he should be in the same league as famed Antarctic explorer Ernest Shackleton.

Race to the Polar Sea covers the span of Kane's action-packed thirty-seven-year life. Except for the early chapters detailing his family genealogy, each section is engrossing and the momentum builds right up to the book's conclusion.

The Old Way North by David F. Pelly moves at a slower pace, but will be of interest to those who love tales of northern travel. It focuses on a little-known and uncelebrated northern wilderness route that stretches from Manitoba to Nunavut on the west side of Hudson Bay.

Pelly, a canoeist, retraces the inland journey made by Ernest C. Oberholtzer in 1912. He draws from Oberholtzer's journal and compares those observations with what a modern wilderness traveller would see today. York boats — sturdy freight boats equipped with sails — were still plying the northern rivers in Oberholtzer's day, although their time would soon end.

Besides Oberholtzer's journal and Pelly's own observations, the book draws from a variety of sources: the journals of nineteenth-century missionaries who established posts along the route, Pelly's interviews with First Nations people, and the perspectives of modern-day canoeists.

Illustrated with black-and-white photos, *The Old Way North* provides a detailed account of a 3,000-kilometre-journey by canoe while reminding us how much of the history of Canada is about the journeys taken on its rivers. As Pelly says, they are "the threads that tie our geography together."

Reviewed by **Nelle Oosterom**, associate editor of *The Beaver*.

MORE BOOKS

The Peaceful Revolution: 250 Years of Democracy in Nova Scotia
by John Boileau
Nimbus Publishing, Halifax, 2008
226 pp., illus.,
$24.95 paperback

Happy birthday, democracy! What's that? You didn't know democracy in Canada recently celebrated its 250th anniversary? Well, it's true.

On October 2, 1758, Nova Scotia's first legislative assembly met in a Halifax courthouse. Earlier that summer, the fledgling colony had held its first election, choosing twenty-two members. Not all of them took their seats, so soon afterwards Nova Scotia became the first colony in what

would eventually become Canada to hold a by-election.

This early "representative" government was far from perfect; only men could vote or run for office, and while the legislative assembly could make suggestions about governance, real power still rested in an appointed upper house, called the Legislative Council. Nova Scotians would have to wait until 1848 before being granted full "responsible government" — also a first in Canada.

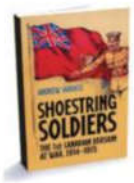
In *The Peaceful Revolution: 250 Years of Democracy in Nova Scotia,* John Boileau takes a workmanlike approach to the story, laying out the chronology of events that led to representative and, later, responsible government in Canada. Beautifully illustrated, the book provides a good overview of a little-known Canadian milestone. — **M.R.**

Thomas D'Arcy McGee, Volume I: Passion, Reason, and Politics, 1925–1857
by David A. Wilson
McGill-Queen's University Press, Montreal, 2008
448 pp., illus.,
$39.95 hardcover

One of Canada's most enigmatic political figures is brought back to life with David Wilson's first installment of his new biography of Thomas D'Arcy McGee.

From his first political speech at the ripe age of seventeen, it's clear that McGee possessed both the passion of ideas and a gift for communicating them. Wilson's meticulously researched Volume I traces the evolution of the political experience and thought of the now legendary Canadian nationalist up to the moment of his decision to leave Ireland and the United States behind and invest in a Canadian future.

While Canadian purists might be tempted to wait for Volume II, Wilson provides new information and insights about McGee's earlier life and career that make this volume well worth reading. — **D.M.**



Shoestring Soldiers: The 1st Canadian Division at War, 1914–1915
by Andrew Iarocci
University of Toronto Press, Toronto, 2008
384 pp., illus.,
$31.50 hardcover

The Second Battle of Ypres is a key moment in the history of Canada and the First World War. Facing chlorine gas and insurmountable odds, the First Canadian Division held back a major German offensive only months after arriving at the front. Using the best information available, *Shoestring Soldiers* is a careful account of this often confus-

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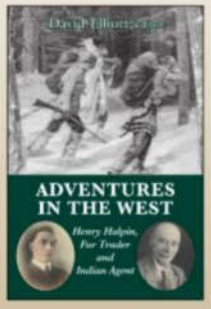

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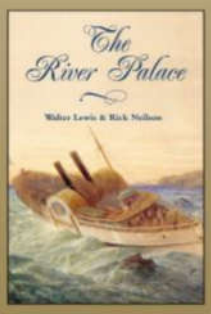

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Reviews

ing and contradictory battle.

Far from being unprepared "green" troops, the backbone of experienced militia and South African veterans within the First Division paid dividends at St. Julien and Ypres, Andrew Iarocci argues. *Shoestring Soldiers* should spark a new discussion of this important battle that claimed more than six thousand Canadian casualties in a matter of days.

— **Joel Ralph**

Running with Dillinger: The Story of Red Hamilton and Other Forgotten Canadian Outlaws
by Edward Butts
Dundurn Press, Toronto, 2008
232 pp., illus.,
$24.99 paperback

Edward Butts' *Running with Dillinger* is easy on readers but treats lawbreakers seriously. In this sequel to his previous story collection *The Desperate Ones: Forgotten Canadian Outlaws*, Butts travels through time and country describing the exploits of famous and not-so-famous criminals.

As he moves from one villain to the next, we learn how some of Canada's worst desperados become celebrities and folk heroes. Names like bank robber "Bloody" Jack Krafchenko, train robber James Henry "Blackie" Audett — whose exploits made him a resident of Alcatraz — and of course John "Red" Hamilton, the right-hand man of bandit John Dillinger, come to life.

Butts tells of cross-border smuggling at Lake Champlain; of Toronto's great train robbery; and of the lengths one master sleuth went to track down a counterfeiter who was so skilled at engraving that he fooled the banks. The historian's task often involves separating fact from fiction, and Butts' careful research helps readers do this.

— **B.T.**

Coming in *The Beaver* February • March

100 Years of Flight
In celebration of the centennial of Canada's entry into the age of air travel, we explore key moments in our country's aviation history:

Silver Dart
A flying machine on a frozen lake in Cape Breton in 1909 launched a triumph for Canada and the entire British Empire.
BY CHARLOTTE GRAY

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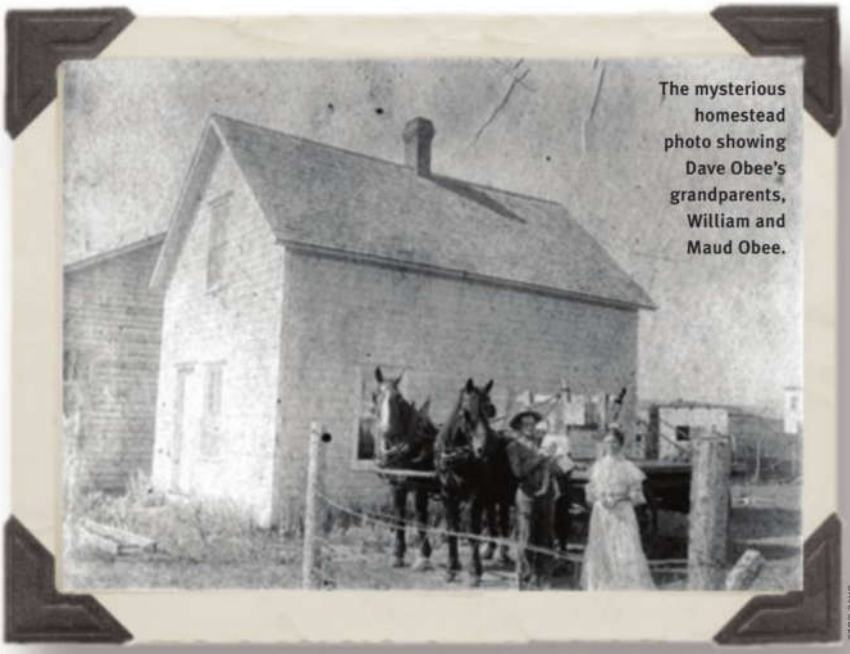
Roots

Home sweet homestead

On the Prairies, land surveys are one key to unlocking the past, says Dave Obee.



The mysterious homestead photo showing Dave Obee's grandparents, William and Maud Obee.

DAVE OBEE

A family photograph that has been passed down through the generations shows my grandparents with horses and has prompted theories that they might have had a homestead.

Did they? If so, they had abandoned it before any of their children were old enough to remember it. And my grandfather certainly did not speak of it in later years.

My grandfather, William Elmer Obee, lived in Saskatchewan for a decade and a half in the early twentieth century, working as the town electrician in Langham, west of Saskatoon.

Like so many others on the Prairies in those years, my grandfather was originally from Ontario. He was born several years after the rush for homesteads began and it was a search for employment, not free land, that brought him to the Prairies. He worked on railway bridges until he got a job running the power plant in Langham.

The mysterious homestead photo shows William and his wife — my grandmother Maud — and one child. That meant the photograph was probably taken in 1906 or 1907, before their second child arrived.

To solve the mystery, I turned to the Internet.

Online databases are making it much easier for family historians to trace their ancestors. Some of these databases deal with *homesteading*, a term that described the federal government program that allowed farmers to get land for free — if they turned it into a farm.

The first homestead database placed on the Internet was the Western Land Grants database, which is found on the Library and Archives Canada website. That database shows people who successfully proved their claim. I searched that database, but could find no sign of my grandfather's name.

At the time, I thought I had hit a dead end. However, a few years later, another database was placed online — this one produced by the Saskatchewan Archives Board, the Saskatchewan Genealogical Society, and several other organizations. It includes everyone who applied for land, not just the people who were successful.

The day the Saskatchewan database hit the Web, I checked for the usual suspects within my family, including my grandfather William.

And there he was — William E. Obee, on the southwest corner of section 16, township 30, range 14, west of the third meridian (or SW16-30-14-W3, as the keeners would say).

I ordered a copy of his file from the Saskatchewan Archives Board. There was just one page, noting that my grandfather had applied for the homestead on November 9, 1906. Apparently, he gave up on the idea soon after.

So, he had briefly hoped to be a homesteader. But the mystery was not quite solved. One question remained — where was the land?

The answer came relatively easily, thanks to the federal government land

On the Web

Peel's Prairie Provinces:
peel.library.ualberta.ca

Alberta Heritage Digitization Project:
ourfutureourpast.ca

Saskatchewan Homesteads:
saskhomesteads.com

Western Land Grants:
collectionscanada.gc.ca/databases/

able way to find locations on much of the Prairies and in parts of British Columbia.

When you are flying over the Prairies, it is difficult to miss the grid pattern that stretches to the horizon in every direction.

This grid system was the creation of surveyors who, after a false start in 1869, went to work in 1871 creating units of land for settlers. Over several decades they carved 275,000 square miles into 1.1 million 160-acre parcels that became known as quarter-sections, or simply quarters. Each parcel was identified with a unique description consisting of eight to eleven letters and numbers.

When looking for a location on the Prairies, start at the end of the description, with the meridian. Meridians are north-south lines that slice across Western Canada. "West of the third," for instance, puts my grandfather's land in the western half of Saskatchewan.

Between meridians we find townships — parcels of land measuring six miles by six miles. Each township has 36 sections, and each section has four quarters, for a total of 144 in a township.

These townships are identified in two ways: north from the international boundary and west, usually from the meridians. My grandfather's land was in the 30th township north of the international boundary and in the 14th township west of the third meridian. (The north-south measure is known as a township; the east-west one is a range.)

Finally, it was time to check a Saskatchewan grid map, which shows sections, townships and ranges. It reveals that the land was northeast of Rosetown. In fact, Highway 7 runs through it.

Files dealing with the homesteading process were compiled by the federal government and have been transferred to provincial archives, making them available to today's researchers.

William Elmer Obee's one-page file from the Saskatchewan Archives Board told me where he was living in November 1906: Saskatoon. Homestead files for other relatives have offered much more, including details on deaths and marriages, military service, and, of course, how the farm was doing.

Many Prairie residents — even those who were living in cities — applied for homesteads a century ago. And why not? The land was free. It was a chance worth taking.

It only makes sense for family historians to check all the sources we have at our fingertips today. You might be surprised at what you find.

Dave Obee has been researching his family history on the Prairies for thirty years and has written several books about genealogy.

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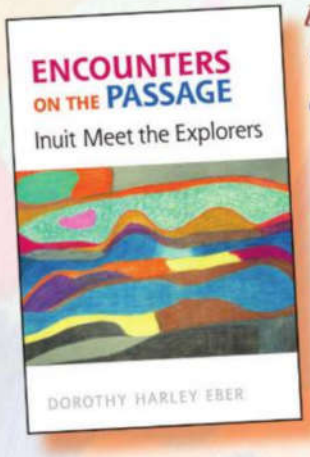

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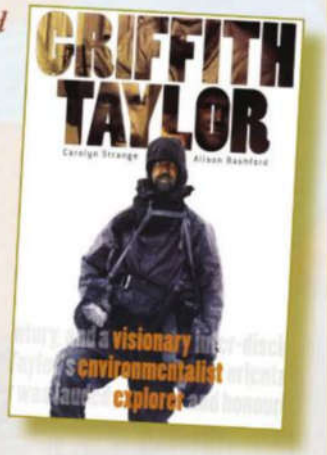

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Getaway

The aluminum teepees on the roof of the interpretive centre symbolize the Blackfoot's sacred societies.

Blackfoot Legacy

Katherine McIntyre tours Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park on Alberta's Siksika Nation.

About an hour east of Calgary, I turned off the Trans-Canada Highway and headed down a lonely prairie road bordered by sweet-smelling, grey-blue sage into the Alberta Badlands. Passing a small memorial to Chief Crowfoot — who signed Canada's Treaty Number 7 — I caught my first glimpse of a shimmering glass-and-stone building. Alone on the crest of a hill, it overlooks the lush Bow River Valley and nearly nine hundred hectares of undulating prairie.

I was in Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, a world-renowned First Nation tourist destination in Canada.

Owned and operated by the Siksika Band of the Blackfoot Confederacy, it blends historic traditions with modern-day tourism. The idea for a memorial came from Prince Charles, who in 1977, while attending the 100th anniversary celebration of Treaty Number 7, suggested "Blackfoot Crossing should be officially remembered."

Prince Charles' suggestion slowly gathered momentum with Siksika elders.

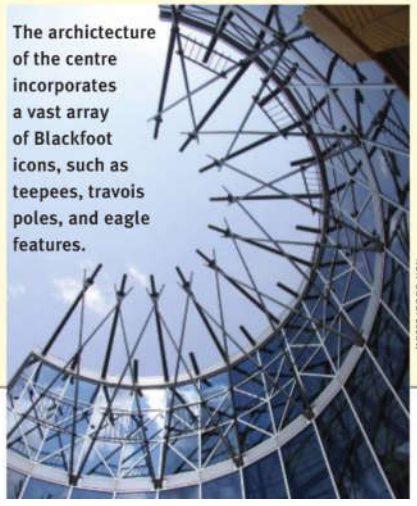
Headed by Chief Stratten Crowfoot, they envisioned a tourist centre to showcase their heritage.

The First Nation donated fifteen square kilometres of parkland. Meanwhile, Calgary architect Ron Goodfellow prepared design drawings. For ideas, he interviewed tribal elders, reviewed historic photographs, and read up on Blackfoot history — from their nomadic lifestyle following the great herds of buffalo, to the intrusion of the first European explorers and settlers, to modern times.

"We scratched for money, getting small grants here and there," Goodfellow says. "Just when we were ready to start, the province cut our funds and we went on hold for ten years."

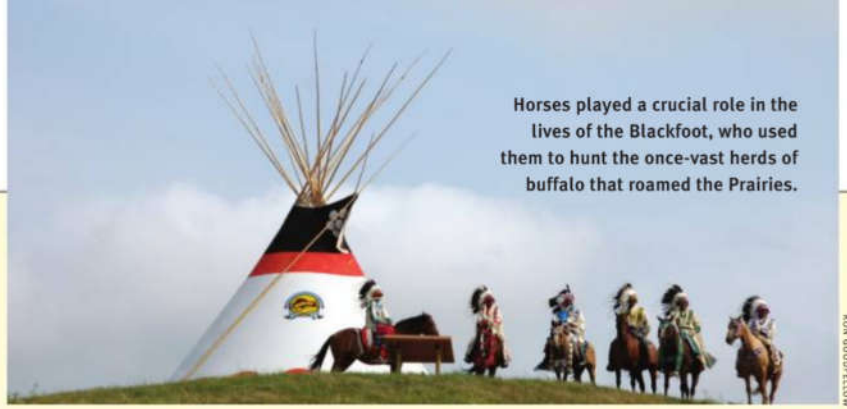
All was not lost. In 2002, thanks to the determination of the Siksika people, the federal and provincial governments agreed to help the Siksika Nation to finance the centre. Soon after, then-Alberta Premier Ralph Klein was turning the sod on the project.

The interpretive centre opened on July 18, 2007. The building is crescent-shaped,



The archictecture of the centre incorporates a vast array of Blackfoot icons, such as teepees, travois poles, and eagle features.

RON GOODFELLOW



Horses played a crucial role in the lives of the Blackfoot, who used them to hunt the once-vast herds of buffalo that roamed the Prairies.

RON GOODFELLOW

its footprint resembling a flattened teepee. On its long, flat roof are seven stylized aluminum teepees representing the Seven Sacred Societies and creating the symbol of an ancient First Nation encampment. Four of these teepees extend through the building to become dioramas depicting important cycles of Blackfoot history.

I passed under a canopy of blue and red stained glass, shaped to resemble sacred eagle feathers. I entered through the east-facing entrance, designed to greet the rising sun. In front of me was a vast two-storey window overlooking the valley. It was there, in 1877, that thousands of Blackfoot gathered to witness Chief Crowfoot sign Treaty Number 7 with representatives of Queen Victoria and the new Canadian government.

With the treaty, they exchanged vast tracts of their traditional land for promises that included protection from whisky traders, and assistance in changing from a nomadic existence to farming on reserves.

RON GOODFELLOW

Still inside the centre, I heard sounds of drumming echo through the halls from a nearby one hundred-seat theatre. On the stage, chicken dancers — splendidly turned out in buckskin trimmed with intricate patterns of tiny coloured beads and wearing magnificent feathered headdresses — whirled to the sounds of haunting chants and beating drums.

"Beads and eagle feathers are as much part of our prairie culture as our teepee," explained Judy Royal, senior interpreter of Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park, as we wound our way down a glass-encased stairway to the lower level.

From nearby story panels, I discovered that when Chief Crowfoot died in 1890 he was totally disillusioned. His people were diseased and starving. The huge herds of bison that had darkened the prairies had disappeared, and settlers had encroached on their land.

The government, meanwhile, had failed to live up to the terms of the treaty. Soon, their problems multiplied. The Blackfoot had trouble with Indian agents. Later, their children were seized and sent to residential schools.

"Now," says Royal, "we are learning from the past, and looking to the future and relearning our past."

Today, a different type of teepee encampment welcomes visitors.

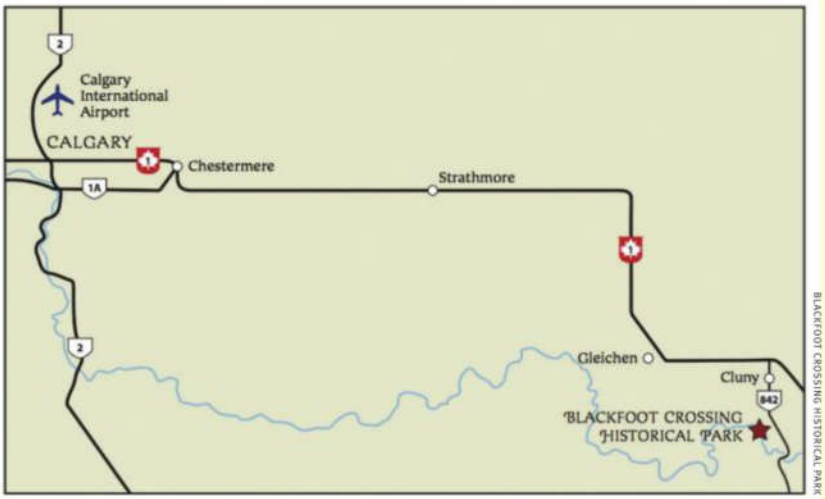
About half a kilometre from the centre, visitors can experience the traditional Blackfoot lifestyle at Buffalo Jump Tipi Village. Its modern-day teepees are complete with small stoves, cots, blankets, water, and a lantern. "Our campers hike, bird-watch, and listen to the storyteller around a campfire under the stars," says Ken Heatly, the teepee coordinator for the cultural centre.

As we toured the surroundings in a modified golf cart, Heatly pointed out an archaeolgical site where there are traces of an earth lodge village. This mysterious place was once a fortified village surrounded by a moat. The site was once home to people thought to have come from the Mandan tribes of North Dakota more than 250 years ago. They lived in mud huts, not teepees, and eventually disappeared.

Back on the sage-bordered road, I took a last look at the solitary building on the old bison trail. I was awed by the determination of the small band of the Siksika Nation to promote and preserve its culture and traditions.

Katherine McIntyre is a freelance writer who combines travel writing with Canadian history.

If you go...



BLACKFOOT CROSSING HISTORICAL PARK

The Siksika First Nation is located one hour east of Calgary, off Highway 842, near the town of Cluny.

Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park
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T: (888) 654-6274
E: info@blackfootcrossing.ca
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Buffalo Jump Tipi Village
Packages range from $200 to $450 per night. Call the Blackfoot Crossing Historical Park's office or use online reservation.
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Your Story

Anna, the King, and I

Rose Zgodzinski says it's time to honour the heroine of The King and I for improving the lives of nineteenth-century Canadians.

On a crisp morning in September 1971, I found myself rushing through Halifax. I was late for registration day at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD) and was somewhat disoriented. Once inside, I asked the first breathing entity I could find for directions to the Anna Leonowens Gallery, where registration was in full swing.

"That's Anna 'Le-a-NOO-anz,'" the young man interrupted, correcting my mangled attempt to pronounce the name of the gallery. "She's Anna, of Anna and the King of Siam," he added.

His confusing reference immediately conjured up that grand fluffy film. Of course, I was familiar with Anna, or rather, Deborah Kerr's fictionalized version of her in the 1956 film *The King and I*. But what was the heroine of a romantic musical comedy doing in my art school? Leonowens' curious introduction took me decades to sort out.

The role with which Leonowens is always associated — the proper English governess who influenced an exotic royal court — is a part she scripted herself. As a young widow, Leonowens wrote to support herself and her two children. She wrote a series of magazine articles for the Boston-based *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in 1870, based on her nearly six-year posting as an English language teacher in Siam (Thailand). Leonowens understood that her vantage point as a modern woman in an ancient royal court was unique. Her articles, which were well received, expanded into two books of memoirs and a series of very popular touring lectures. Leonowens' version of her adventure in Siam had turned her into a celebrity.

The Canadian side to Leonowens' story only came into focus for me many decades after I had left both Halifax and NSCAD. My curiosity was again piqued after I read about her in *The First Hundred Years: A History of the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design*, written by Donald Soucy and Harold Pearse.

Anna H. Leonowens, 1903.

MCCORD MUSEUM ARCHIVES

In this account, Leonowens seemed accomplished and charismatic. I wanted to know more. When I went looking for Leonowens' life in Canada, I found that it was rooted in her Siamese commission. While Leonowens brought her young son Louis with her to Siam, she sent her eight-year-old daughter Avis to boarding school in England, fearing the experience would not be appropriate for a young girl. Young Avis was so devastated by the family separation that, after they were reunited, mother and daughter vowed never to be separated again.

This promise would eventually bring Leonowens to Canada.

It began when Avis married a Scottish banker named Thomas Fyshe. After Fyshe accepted a job at the Bank of Nova Scotia in Halifax, Anna joined the newlyweds in Nova Scotia.

Anna Leonowens was forty-seven years old when she arrived in Halifax in 1878. At this point in her life, she was a well-received author and sought-after lecturer. Having attained a respected position in Halifax society, she enthusiastically threw herself into numerous community projects. She helped found the Victorian Order of Nurses, as well as a local chapter of the National Council of Women. Leonowens worked for reforms on school boards, at Rockhead Prison, in Halifax, and at immigration facilities, all the while continuing to write and lecture. She started schools, book clubs, and literature societies.

In 1887, to commemorate Queen Victoria's golden jubilee year, Leonowens suggested founding an art school, which came into reality as the Victoria School of Art (later to morph into NSCAD).

Women played a significant role in the art school's inception; seven woman, including Leonowens, were on the board of directors during its early years. Indeed, one of the official objectives stated in the art school's constitution was "to open up new and remunerative employment for women."

This is where I come into the picture, because I feel like I am one of the young women that NSCAD mentioned in its constitution in 1887, even though I came on the scene eighty-five years later.

Throughout my design career, I have come to value my NSCAD incubation as essential to my work life. I can't help but feel touched by Leonowens' efforts to start the school for me, as it were. Heringenuity and motivation are inspiring, because she made her own way through a difficult life to become a respected teacher, writer, and activist. Thanks to her, I was able to develop a belief in my own abilities.

However, despite Leonowens' efforts in Canada to try to better the lives of those around her, she is still mainly recognized for a five-year embellished adventure in an exotic land.

In 1968, the gallery at NSCAD was dedicated to Anna Leonowens as "a testament to a probing, creative spirit directed towards service."

It's not a bad start. But really, doesn't she deserve a little more recognition for her efforts?

Rose Zgodzinski is a graphic designer/illustrator who creates maps, charts, and diagrams. She generally writes about being lost — the maps, charts, and diagrams are supposed to help her find her way home.

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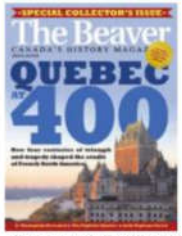

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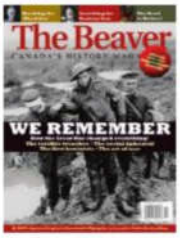

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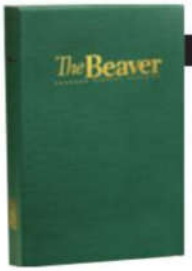

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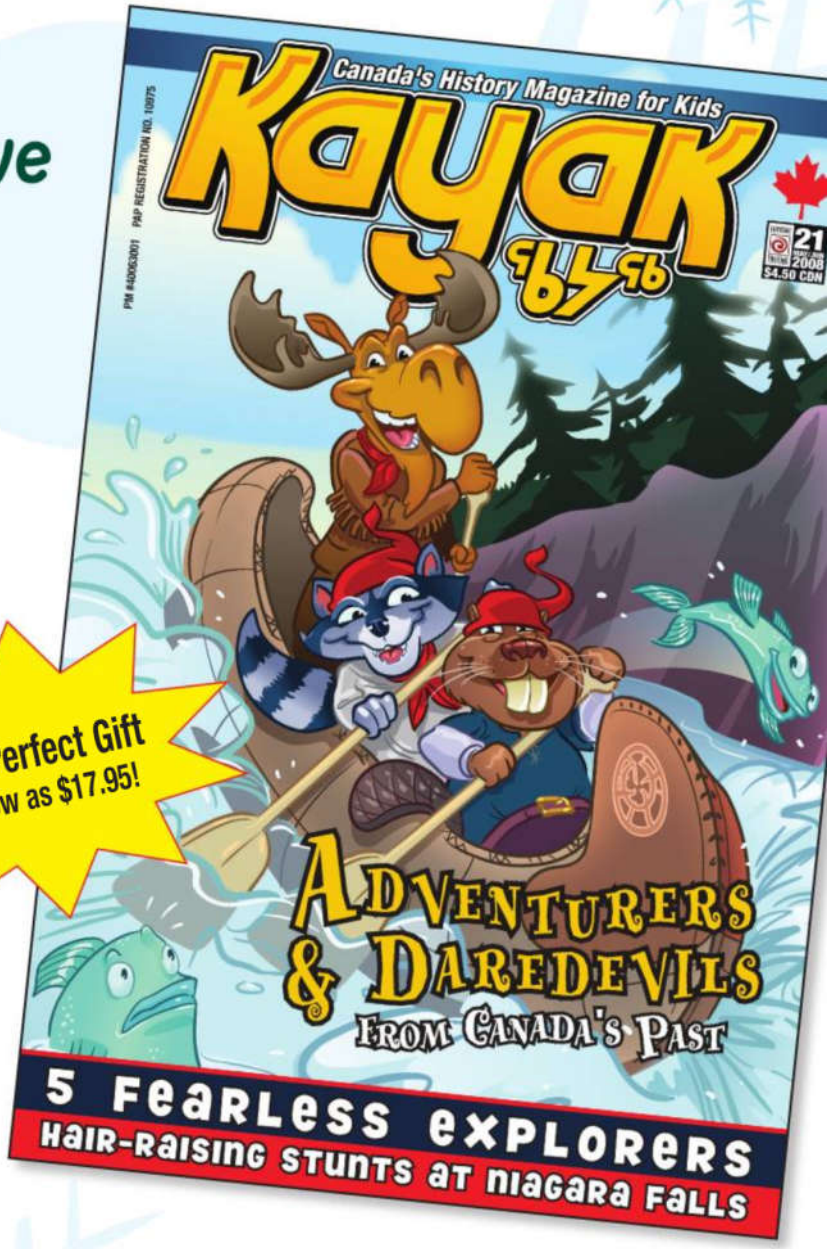

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Christopher Moore

That King-Byng thing

Often dismissed as mere figureheads, Canada's governors general still hold the trump card when Parliament comes calling.

I've never met any members of the British Royal Family, and I don't really expect to. But I've had the chance to meet or see several governors general and lieutenant governors over the years, and that has helped reinforce my sense of the governor general as our real head of state. More present and less exotic than a British royal, she is part of our Canadian community and our ceremonial life, and that seems a good thing.

Among the ceremonies and presentations, it is easy to forget that a governor general has a constitutional role as well. These days, when constitutional lawyers and historians consider the governor general's role, it seems we are always one step from a constitutional crisis.

In September 2008, when Michaëlle Jean accepted Prime Minister Stephen Harper's advice and dissolved Parliament for the October 14 election, several lawyers, political scientists, and historians declared she should have rejected the prime minister's advice. They wanted her to make her own decision on the matter. "If she says yes," wrote historian Michael Behiels of the University of Ottawa, anticipating the Governor General's response to the prime minister's advice, "she will be helping to undermine the rule of law."

I must say this astonished me. I thought it was parliamentary bedrock that the Crown does not take independent action. Rather, the Crown acts on the advice of advisers responsible to the people's elected representatives. But today many Canadians are frustrated with the arbitrary actions of prime ministers. Members of Parliament will not rein them in, so the search for countervailing forces has led the critics to Rideau Hall.

Lord and Lady Byng of Vimy.

CANADIAN PRESS

Was this not settled in the King-Byng crisis of 1926?

In June 1926, King — that's Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King — had been running a minority government for eight months. Too clever by half, King wanted the governor general to dissolve Parliament to help King avoid a Commons vote that would put his Liberals out and the Conservatives in. Byng — that's Field Marshal the Viscount Byng of Vimy, governor general of Canada since 1921 — said no, and swore in Arthur Meighen as the new prime minister.

Byng was correct in that decision, most historians agree. Since Meighen's Conservatives, who actually held more seats than King's Liberals, had won over the Progressives (who had kept King in power until then), it was clear Parliament intended to change its consensus on who should be prime minister. Byng, in other words, was not independently rejecting advice from his prime minister so much as acceding to Parliament's message that it wanted to change who advised him.

King-Byng showed a governor general taking direction from Parliament, as he should. In 2008, by comparison,

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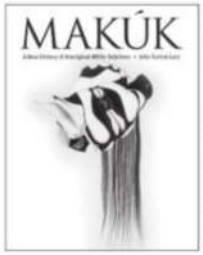

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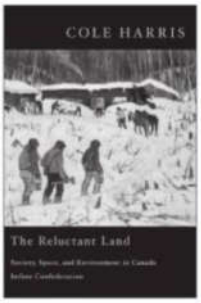

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Parliament was offering no hint that Stéphane Dion was eager to form a government, nor that he could have mustered support from other parties if he tried. With no change of her advisers in the offing, it seems hard to fault Governor General Jean for taking the advice of the prime minister that Parliament had given her.

That, however, is not the view of a historian (Behiels), a political scientist (Lawrence LeDuc of the University of Toronto), and a constitutional lawyer (Errol Mendes of the University of Ottawa law school). They are assisting Democracy Watch, an Ottawa lobby group, in seeking a Federal Court ruling that the Governor General's dissolution of Parliament was illegal.

William Lyon Mackenzie King

"The law is the new factor," Behiels told me recently. He was referring to a law Prime Minister Harper himself had introduced — the one amending the Election Act to require fixed election dates. That law, passed in November 2006, seemed to promise that a prime minister could no longer recommend dissolution of Parliament. As Behiels puts it, the governor general "is bound by the Constitution, and that includes all the laws."

But the new law on fixed election dates includes a loophole, a provision that allows the governor general to dissolve Parliament before the fixed election date. Indeed, changing the powers of the governor general in this regard would have required a constitutional amendment, says constitutional lawyer Patrick Monahan of Osgoode Hall Law School. Monahan argues that Harper's fixed elections law clearly disavowed any such intention.

Even Behiels agrees that it was "a bad law, probably not needed under our parliamentary system ... a bit of Reform flim-flam."

I can't see much future in Democracy Watch's legal challenge and its law-centred, rather than Parliament-centred, view of government. But the crisis we avoided raises a larger question. A governor general does have a constitutional role, constrained though it is. And today, whether she does too much or too little, it seems almost certain that any action is likely to have someone crying "unconstitutional!"

If Michaëlle Jean had refused Harper his dissolution in September, it's easy to imagine the Conservative campaign against her: see the Governor General, an ex-broadcaster with no constitutional credentials, a Liberal appointee, part of that fancy gala-going urban elite, acting as an unelected autocrat and denying the Canadian people an election? What's democratic about that?

Frankly, that would be an accusation with force behind it, and the damage to the office would be enormous.

We need a Canadian head of state, and I'd say our recent governors general have done a wonderful job in filling the ceremonial and symbolic aspects of the office. But there's always the prospect of that constitutional responsibility arising. And a head of state whose standing relies on prime ministerial patronage is always going to be in a weak position.

In Ireland, a parliamentary democracy much like Canada, the head of state is a president whose powers are the same very limited ones held by our current Governor General. But Irish presidents are elected by the Irish people. Being elected does not authorize them to push the government around, but it does confer on them the moral authority to fill their office with confidence — in times of harmony or crisis.

Hmm....

Christopher Moore comments in every issue of *The Beaver*.

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The Beaver was founded in 1920 by the Hudson's Bay Company, whose commitment to the History Society and its programs continues today through the ***Hudson's Bay Company History Foundation***.

Head of the Class

Governor General's Award winners make history come alive for students.

They work on the frontlines, making history both engaging and informative for students. Each year, Canada's National History Society is proud to recognize the history teachers across Canada who go beyond the call of duty in the classroom.

Through the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History, the History Society honours teachers who lead by example. Their job is not an easy one, but the energy these teachers collectively bring to the task of teaching history is infectious.

While these teachers may come from different regions and school systems, they all share a dedication to their craft, and stand as examples for all of us who care about the teaching of history.

This year's award-winning teachers are:

JEAN-PIERRE FRIGON

ÉCOLE SECONDAIRE PAUL-LE JEUNE
SAINT-TITE, QUEBEC

YVES PROVENCHER

Jean-Pierre Frigon stimulates the learning of history through a number of educational activities — presentations, projects, field trips, and exchanges — which involve students directly.

One of the dominant themes in his class is Canada's involvement in the great international events of the twentieth century.

In The Roads to Freedom (*Les chemins de la liberté*), Jean-Pierre leads his students to explore the contribution of their region and that of Canada as a whole to the Allied war effort against the Nazis.

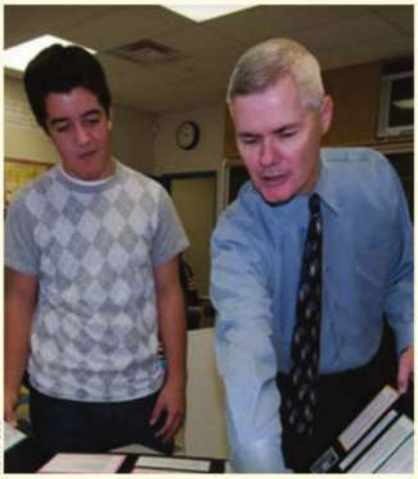
This project is centred around the production of an historic calendar dedicated to local veterans and an international exchange between students from Quebec and France that was focused on underlining the contribution of Canadians to the liberation of France.

This project entailed an enormous amount of time and resources.

It involved visiting commemorative historic sites, and culminated in the production of a commemorative space dedicated to veterans at École secondaire Paul-Le Jeune.

ROB ALLEN

JOHN ULAN


ROB ALLEN

Nancy Hamer-Strahl

Port Perry High School
Port Perry, Ontario

Nancy Hamer-Strahl places an emphasis on student achievement through the Multiple Intelligences teaching philosophy, which allows students to showcase and develop specific talents.

In her history unit, students examined Canada's role in the Second World War through various projects. They studied the paramilitary camp known as "Camp X" in Whitby, Ontario. They interviewed veterans of the camp and visited the site. The class put together a museum, labelling and archiving items and antiques, and then shared their museum with parents, politicians, and community members. Students also created time capsules for Juno Beach and the Battle of Hong Kong.

Through primary source research, interviewing veterans, and connecting with students in Canada, Hong Kong, and Japan, students assembled artifacts and pieces of personal reflection. The latter project was published as the book, *Passing the Torch: Our Youth Remembers Hong Kong.*

Students also learned about the battle of Vimy Ridge and completed a memorial plaque project commemorating local veterans.

Bev Milobar denOuden

Colchester School
Sherwood Park, Alberta

Bev Milobar denOuden created a local history inquiry project that presents students with the opportunity to discover the changes in their community over time using critical thinking to connect the past with the present.

Using stories as a vehicle for knowledge, Bev encourages students to develop an interest in both local and national history.

This year, students were presented with the question, "Should we preserve the past?"

Students formulated their own questions and investigations.

Through the use of primary sources and artifacts, students became responsible for their own learning.

They created projects that answered critical questions, which were then displayed at a school-wide heritage fair.

Students also worked together to develop both a picture book and a documentary film about the importance of remembering the past in their local community.

For the past three years, Bev has also been the lead teacher for the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement project titled "Focus on Inquiry."

Joe Stafford,

Saint Theresa Catholic Sec. School
Belleville, Ontario

In Joe Stafford's Canadian history class, students are encouraged to think critically about both past and present issues.

In the Diamond Jubilee Re-Enactment, students create poster boards and organize an event to celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of Confederation.

Dressed in 1920s attire, students invite the community to dance, eat, and learn about Canada's achievements and challenges.

Joe also encourages his students to learn about active citizenry and issues of social justice.

Throughout the year, students keep a current events journal, and in the culminating activity they examine major themes of the past that are connected to current issues.

Students present their project through a visual display and develop a creative piece to enhance their work.

Joe has taught Canadian history for over twenty years.

His passion for history also extends beyond the classroom, with his work with the Ontario History and Social Sciences Association in promoting Canadian history and his involvement with a history club, the Renaissance Society.

LAURA LEYSHON

LAURA LEYSHON

CATHLEEN ANNE TENNING

VICTORIA HIGH SCHOOL
VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Cathleen Anne Tenning has been teaching First Nations studies at Victoria High School in Victoria for seven years.

Cathleen is a member of the Chemainus First Nation on Vancouver Island and uses this experience in her teaching. She is completing a master's degree in environmental and First Nations education at the University of Victoria. She has also worked as an aboriginal academic counsellor assisting First Nations students.

Cathleen encourages hands-on learning through field trips and environmental studies outside of the classroom. Through "talking circles," students share their learning and personal experiences.

In "Walking on the Lands of Our Ancestors," students are immersed in the history of First Nations people from the area. Students hear personal accounts from guest speakers, visit historical locations, and learn how First Nations people lived in the past and the issues they face in the present day. Students complete reflective journals and express their knowledge and thoughts in a creative manner.

MIKE WARD

PALSSON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
LAKE COWICHAN, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Mike Ward believes that students learn best through personal experience, and with his social studies Pioneer Village his students are given that opportunity.

The Pioneer Village brings Canadian history to life as students create their own community on a four-foot-by-eight-foot, dirt-covered table. Each student becomes a pioneer in this new land and through role-playing, problem-solving, and public speaking, each learns the rights and responsibilities that accompany citizenship.

Mike guides students from the first arrival and the clearing of their new land to the creation of businesses, the election of a government, and eventually the development of a modern society. Students are challenged to decide what their community will need to survive.

To accompany the Pioneer Village, students complete projects and participate in various activities as the classroom is transformed into their mini-community. By the end of the unit, students gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their history, and their own community.

Special thanks

The History Society is proud to recognize Canada's talented and inspirational history teachers through the Governor General's Awards for Excellence in Teaching Canadian History. The History Society is grateful for the commitment of our partners, Library and Archives Canada and TD Financial Group. The History Society also thanks Governor General Michaëlle Jean for her ongoing encouragement and support of our awards program.

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Mary Corning Woodland is the niece of Josephine Rogers Crosby Woodland and resides in Vancouver.

Winter Style

Mary Corning Woodland's aunt, Josephine Rogers Crosby Woodland, was born in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia. She married Dr. George Woodland and in 1905 they came to live in Medicine Hat, Alberta. Life was good for the Woodland family and Josephine became a local style maven, as you can see from her gorgeous winter costume. Her pre-First World War outfit included a large fur hat complete with plume, matching fur scarf (or stole), and a hand muff. Animal rights were not an issue in those days; fur was regarded as both warm and stylish. A similar muff sold by the Hudson's Bay Company in the winter of 1910 was described as "Coney Ermine, made from seven large full-furred skins. Lined throughout with ivory satin, trimmed with heads and tails forming a very pretty effect." Priced at ten dollars, it was a tidy sum of money in those days. The hat was perhaps not altogether practical on a cold, windy prairie day, but fashion prevailed. Heads must have turned when Josephine wore her ensemble in the small town of Medicine Hat, or during the family's six-month trip to Europe, taken while their large new house was being constructed on the Esplanade (later First Street). In 1926, the Woodlands left for the more temperate climate of Vancouver, taking their young niece Mary with them. Once there, Josephine Woodland continued to be a fashion trendsetter.

Do you have an old photograph that captures a moment, important or ordinary, in Canada's history? If you would like to submit it for possible publication, have it copied (please don't send priceless originals) and mail it to Album, c/o *The Beaver*, P.O. Box 56060, Portage Place RPO, Winnipeg, MB, R3B 0G9. Or email your submission to album@thebeaver.ca. Include a brief description of the photo, including its date and location. If possible, identify people in the photograph and provide further information about the event or situation illustrated. To have your posted submission returned, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

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